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# SELECTED ENGLISH POEMS

FOR  
INDIAN STUDENTS

Edited by

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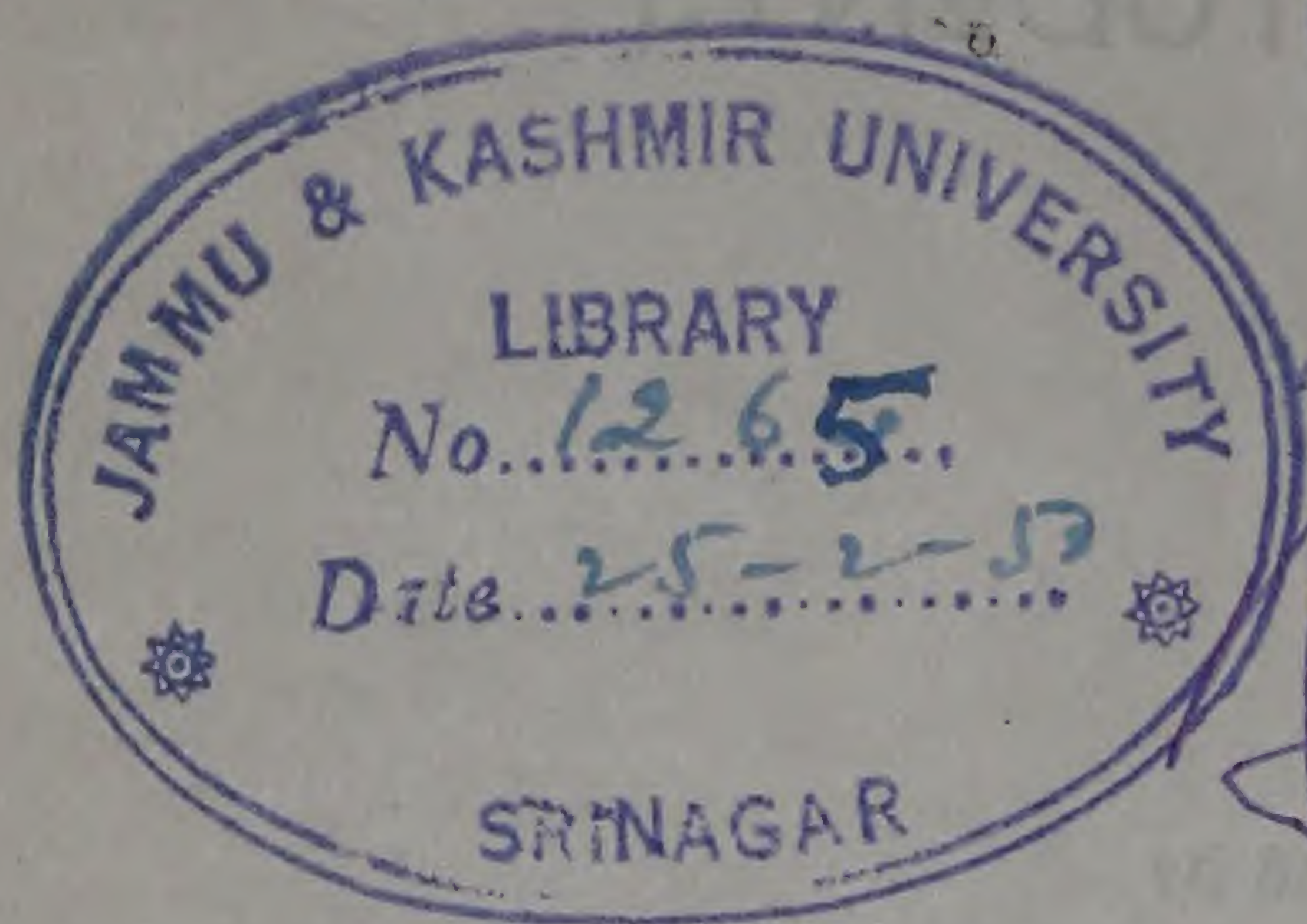
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## THE QUALITY OF MERCY

The quality of mercy is not strain'd ;  
 It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
 Upon the place beneath : it is twice blest ;  
 It blesseth him that gives and him that takes :  
 'Tis mightiest in the mightiest : it becomes  
 The throned monarch better than his crown :  
 His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,  
 The attribute to awe and majesty,  
 Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings,  
 But mercy is above this sceptred sway ; 10  
 It is enthroned in the hearts of kings,  
 It is an attribute to God himself :  
 And earthly power doth then show likest God's  
 When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,  
 Though justice be thy plea, consider this— 15  
 That, in the course of justice, none of us  
 Should see salvation : we do pray for mercy ;  
 And that same prayer doth teach us all to render  
 Deeds of mercy.

*William Shakespeare*



## II

### ON HIS BLINDNESS

When I consider how my light is spent  
 Ere half my days in this dark world and wide,  
 And that one talent which is death to hide  
 Lodged with me useless, though my soul more bent  
 To serve therewith my Maker, and present  
 My true account, lest He returning chide ;  
 "Doth God exact day labour, light denied ?"  
 I fondly ask. But Patience, to prevent  
 That murmur, soon replies. "God doth not need  
 Either man's work or his own gifts. Who best 10  
 Bear His mild yoke, they serve him best. His state  
 Is kindly : thousands at His bidding speed,  
 And post o'er land and ocean without rest ;  
 They also serve who only stand and wait."

*John Milton*

## III

### TO BLOSSOMS

Fair pledges of a fruitful tree,  
 Why do ye fall so fast ?  
 Your date is not so past  
 But you may stay yet here awhile  
 To blush and gently smile,  
 And go at last.

What ! were you born to be  
 An hour or half's delight,  
 And so to bid good-night ?  
 'T was pity Nature brought ye forth  
 Merely to show your worth  
 And lose your quite,



But you are lovely leaves, where we  
    May read how soon things have  
    Their end, though ne'er so brave :  
And after they have shown their pride,  
    Like you awhile, they glide  
    Into the grave.

*Robert Herrick*

#### IV

### MACFLECKNOE

All human things are subject to decay,  
And when Fate summons, monarchs must obey.  
This Flecknoe found, who, like Augustus, young  
Was called to empire and governed long :  
In prose and verse was owned without dispute,  
Through all the realms of Nonsense absolute.  
This aged prince, now flourishing in peace,  
And blest with issue of a large increase ;  
Worn out with business, did at length debate  
To settle the succession of the State ;  
And, pondering which of all his sons was fit  
To reign and wage immortal war with wit,  
Cried, " 'Tis resolved, for nature pleads that he  
Should only rule who most resembles me,  
Shadwell alone my perfect image bears,  
Mature in dullness from his tender years :  
Shadwell alone of all my sons, is he  
Who stands confirmed in full stupidity.  
The rest to some faint meaning make pretence,  
But shadwell never deviates into sense.  
Some beams of wit on other souls may fall,  
Strike through and make a lucid interval :  
But Shadwell's genuine night admits no ray,  
His rising fogs prevail upon the day.

10

20



Besides, his goodly fabric fills the eye  
And seems designed for thoughtless majesty ;  
Thoughtless as monarch oaks that shade the plain,  
And, spread in solemn state. supinely reign.

*John Dryden*

V

THE VILLAGE PREACHER

Near yonder copse, where once the garden smiled,  
And still where many a garden-flower grows wild,  
There, where a few torn shrubs the place disclose,  
The village preacher's modest mansion rose.  
A man he was to all the country dear,  
And passing rich with forty pounds a year.  
Remote from towns he ran his godly race,  
Nor e'er had changed, nor wished to change, his place ;  
Unpractised he to fawn, or seek for power  
By doctrines fashioned to the varying hour ; 10  
Far other aims his heart had learned to prize,  
More skilled to raise the wretched than to rise.  
His house was known to all the vagrant train ;  
He chid their wanderings, but relieved their pain ;  
The long remembered beggar was his guest,  
Whose beard descending swept his aged breast ;  
The ruined spendthrift, now no longer proud,  
Claimed kindred there, and had his claims allowed ;  
The broken soldier, kindly bade to stay,  
Sat by his fire, and talked the night away ;— 20  
Wept o'er his wounds or, tales of sorrow done  
Shouldered his crutch and showed how fields were won.  
Pleased with his guests, the good man learned to glow,  
And quite forgot their vices in their woe ;  
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,  
His pity gave ere charity began.



Thus to relieve the wretched was his pride,  
And e'en his failing leaned to virtue's side ;  
But in his duty, prompt at every call ;  
He watched and wept, he prayed and felt, for all ; 30  
And, as a bird each fond endearment tries  
To tempt its new-fledged offspring to the skies,  
He tried each art, reproved each dull delay,  
Allured to brighter words, and led the way.

Beside the bed where parting life was laid,  
And sorrow, guilt, and pain, by turns dismayed,  
The reverend champion stood. At his control  
Despair and anguish fled the struggling soul ;  
Comfort came down the trembling wretch to raise,  
And his last faltering accents whispered praise. 40

At church, with meek and unaffected grace,  
His looks adorned the venerable place ;  
Truth from his lips prevailed with double sway,  
And fools, who came to scoff, remained to pray.  
The service past around the pious man  
With steady zeal, each honest rustic ran ;  
E'en children followed, with endearing wile,  
And plucked his gown, to share the good man's smile ;  
His ready smile a parent's warmth express'd ;  
Their welfare pleas'd him, and their cares distress'd ;  
To them his heart, his love, his griefs were given,  
But all his serious thoughts has rest in heaven.

*Oliver Goldsmith*

## VI THE PIPING SONG

Piping down the valleys wild,  
Piping songs of pleasant glee,  
On a cloud I saw a child,  
And he laughing said to me :



“Pipe a song about a Lamb !”

So I piped with merry cheer.

“Piper, pipe that song again” ;

So I piped : he wept to hear.

“Drop thy pipe, the happy pipe ;

Sing thy songs of happy cheer” :

So I sang the same again

While he wept with joy to hear.

“Piper, sit thee down and write

In a book, that all may read.”

So he vanished from my sight,

And I plucked a hollow reed,

And I made a rural pen.

And I stained the water clear,

And I wrote my happy songs

Every child may joy to hear.

*William Blake*

## VII

### ELEGY

#### WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,  
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,  
The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,  
And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,  
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,  
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,  
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds ;



- Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower  
The moping owl does to the moon complain 10  
Of such as wandering near her secret bower,  
Molest her ancient solitary reign.
- Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,  
Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap, 15  
Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,  
The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.
- The breezy call of incense-breathing Morn,  
The swallow twittering from the straw built shed,  
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn, 20  
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.
- For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,  
Or busy housewife ply her evening care ;  
No children run to lisp their sire's return,  
Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.
- Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield, 25  
Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke ;  
How jocund did they drive their team afield !  
How bow'd the woods beneath their sturdy stroke !
- Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,  
Their homely joys and destiny obscure ; 30  
Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile  
The short and simple annals of the poor.
- The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,  
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,  
Await alike the inevitable hour : 35  
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.
- Nor you, ye Proud, impute to these the fault,  
If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,  
Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault  
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise. 40



Can storied urn or animated bust  
Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath ?  
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust.  
Or Flattery sooth the dull cold ear of Death ?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid  
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire ;  
Hands that the rod of empire might have sway'd,  
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

45

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page  
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll ;  
Chill Penury repress'd their noble rage  
And froze the genial current of the soul.

50

Full many a gem of purest ray serene  
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear ;  
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,  
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

55

Some village Hampden that which dauntless breast  
The little tyrant of his fields withstood ;  
Some mute in glorious Milton here may rest,  
Some Cromwell, guiltless of his country's blood.

60

The applause of listening senates to command,  
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,  
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,  
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade ; nor circumscribed alone  
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined ;  
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,  
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,

65

The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,  
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,  
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and pride  
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.

70



Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife.  
Their sober wishes never learned to stray ;  
Along the cool sequestered vale of life  
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

75

Yet e'en these bones from insult to protect  
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,  
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,  
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.

80

Their name, their years, spelt by th' unletter'd Muse,  
The place of fame and elegy supply ;  
And many a holy text around she strews  
That teach the rustic moralist to die.

For who, to dumb forgetfulness a prey,  
This pleasing anxious being e'er resign'd,  
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,  
Nor cast one longing, lingering look behind ?

85

On some fond breast the parting soul relies,  
Some pious drops the closing eyes requires ;  
Ev'n from the tomb the voice of Nature cries,  
Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires.

90

For thee, who mindful of the unhonour'd dead,  
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate ;  
If chance, by lonely contemplation led,  
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

95

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,  
'Oft have we seen him at the deep of dawn  
Brushing with hasty step the dew away,  
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

100

There at the foot of yonder nodding beech  
That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,  
His listless length at noontide would he stretch,  
And pore upon the brooke that babbles by.



'Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,  
Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove,  
Now drooping, woeful-wan, like one forlorn,  
Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love. 105

'One morn I missed him on the customed hill,  
Along the heath and near his favorite tree ;  
Another came ; nor yet beside the rill,  
Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was her ; 110

'The next with dirges due in sad array  
Slow thro' the church way path we saw him borne.  
Approach and read for thou can'st read the lay  
Graved on the stone beneath you aged thorn.' 115

### THE EPITAPH

Here rests his head upon the lap of Earth  
A youth to Fortune and to Fame unknown.  
Fair Science frowned not on his humble birth,  
And Melancholy mark'd him for her own. 120

Large was his bounty, and his soul sincere,  
Heaven did a recompense as largely send ;  
He gave to Misery all he had, a tear,  
He gained from Heaven, 'twas all he wish'd a friend.

No father seek his merits to disclose.  
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode,  
(There they alike in trembling hope repose)  
The bosom of his Father and his God. 125

*Thomas Gray*



## THREE YEARS SHE GREW

Three years she grew in sun and shower,  
 Then Nature said, 'A lovelier flower  
 On earth was never sown,  
 This Child I to myself will take :  
 She shall be mine, and I will make  
 A Lady of my own

"Myself will to my darling be  
 Both law and impulse : and with me  
 The Girl in rock and plain,  
 In earth and heaven, in glade and bower,  
 Shall feel an overseeing power  
 To kindle or restrain.

10

"She shall be sportive as the fawn  
 That wild with glee across the lawn,  
 Or up the mountain springs ;  
 And hers shall be the breathing balm,  
 And hers the silence and the calm  
 Of mute insensate things.

"The floating clouds their state shall lend  
 To her : for her the willow bend ;  
 Nor shall she fail to see  
 Even in the motions of the Storm  
 Grace that shall mould the Maiden's form  
 By silent sympathy.

20

The stars of midnight shall be dear  
 To her ; and she shall lean her ear  
 In many a secret place  
 Where rivulets dance their wayward round,  
 And beauty born of murmuring sound  
 Shall pass into her face.

30



“And vital feelings of delight  
Shall rear her form to stately height,  
Her virgin bosom swell ;  
Such thoughts to Lucy I will give  
While she and I together live  
Here in this happy dell.”

Thus Nature spake.—The work was done.—  
How soon my Lucy's race was run !  
She died, and left to me  
This heath, this calm and quiet scene ;  
The memory of what has been,  
And never more will be.

40

*William Wordsworth*

## IX

### THE DAFFODILS

I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hill,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,  
A host, of golden daffodils ;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.  
Continuous as the stars that shine  
And twinkle in the Milky Way,  
They stretched in never-ending line  
Along the margin of a bay :  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

10

The waves beside them danced ; but they  
Out-did the sparkling waves in glee :  
A poet could not but be gay  
In such a jocund company :  
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
What wealth the show to me had brought :



For oft when on my couch I lie  
In vacant or in pensive mood,  
They flash upon that inward eye  
Which is the bliss of solitude ;  
And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
And dances with the daffodils.

20

*William Wordsworth*

## X

### THE WORLD

The world is too much with us ; late and soon,  
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers :  
Little we see in Nature that is ours ;  
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon !  
The sea that bares her bosom to the moon ;  
The winds that will be howling at all hours,  
And are up-gathered now like sleeping flowers ;  
For this, for everything, we are out of tune ;  
It moves us not—Great God ! I'd rather be  
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn  
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn ;  
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea ;  
Or hear old Triton blow his wretched horn.

10

*William Wordsworth*

## XI

### MICHAEL

If from the public way you turn your steps  
Up the tumultuous brook of Green-head Ghyll,  
You will suppose that with an upright path  
Your feet must struggle ; in such bold ascent  
The pastoral mountains from you, face to face.



But, courage ! for around that boisterous brook  
 The mountains have all opened out themselves,  
 And made a hidden valley of their own.  
 No habitation can be seen ; but they  
 Who journey thither find themselves alone. 10  
 With a few sheep, with a rocks and stones, and kites  
 That overhead are sailing in the sky.  
 It is in truth an utter solitude ;  
 Nor should I have made mention of this Dell  
 But for one object which you might pass by,  
 Might see and notice not. Beside the brook  
 Appears a straggling heap of unhewn stones  
 And to that simple object appertains  
 A story—unenriched with strange events,  
 Yet not unfit, I deem, for the fireside, 20  
 Or for the summer shade. It was the first  
 Of those domestic tales that spake to me  
 Of shepherds, dwellers in the valleys, men  
 Whom I already loved, not verily  
 For their own sakes, but for the fields and hills  
 Where was their occupation and abode.  
 And hence this tale, while I was yet a boy  
 Careless of books, yet having felt the power  
 Of Nature by the gentle agency,  
 Of natural objects, let me on to feel 30  
 For passions that were not my own, and think  
 (At random and imperfectly indeed)  
 On man, the heart of man, and human life.  
 Therefore, although it be a history  
 Homely and rude, I will relate the same  
 For the delight of a few natural hearts :  
 And, with yet fonder feeling, for the sake  
 Of youthful Poets, who among these hills  
 Will be my second self when I am gone.

UPON the forest-side in Grasmere Vale 40  
 There dwelt a Shepherd, Michael was his name  
 An old man, stout of heart and strong of limb.  
 His bodily frame had been from youth to age  
 Of an unusual strength ; his mind was keen,  
 Intense, and frugal, apt for all affairs



And in his shepherd's calling he was prompt  
 And watchful more than ordinary men.  
 Hence had he learned the meaning of all winds,  
 Of blasts of every tone ; and, oftentimes,  
 When others heeded not, he heard the South 50  
 Make subterraneous music, like the noise  
 Of bagpipers on distant Highland hills.  
 The Shepherd, at such warning, of his flock  
 Bethought him, and he to himself would say,  
 "The winds are now devising work for me !"  
 And, truly, at all times, the storm, that drives  
 The traveller to a shelter, summoned him  
 Up to the mountains : he had been alone  
 Amid the heart of many thousand mists,  
 That came to him, and left him, on the heights. 60  
 So lived he till his eightieth year was past.  
 And grossly that man errs who should suppose  
 That the green valleys, and the streams and rocks,  
 Were things indifferent to the Shepherd's thoughts.  
 Fields, where with cheerful spirits he had breathed  
 The common air ; hills, which with vigorous step  
 He had so often climbed ; which had impressed  
 So many incidents upon his mind  
 Of hardship, skill or courage, joy or fear ;  
 Which, like a book, preserved the memory 70  
 Of the dumb animals, whom he had saved,  
 Had fed or sheltered, linking to such acts  
 The certainty of honourable gain ;  
 Those fields, those hills--what could they less ? had laid  
 Strong hold on his affections, were to him  
 A pleasurable feeling of blind love,  
 The pleasure which there is in life itself.

His days had not been passed in singleness.  
 His Helpmate was a comely matron old  
 Though younger than himself full twenty years, 80  
 She was a woman of a stirring life,  
 Whose heart was in her house : two wheels she had  
 Of antique form ; this large, for spinning wool ;  
 That small, for flax ; and if one wheel had rest  
 It was because the other was at work.



The Pair had but one inmate in their house,  
An only Child, who had been born to them  
When Michael, telling o'er his years began  
To deem that he was old, in shepherd's phrase,  
With one foot in the grave. This only Son,  
With two brave sheep dogs tried in many a storm,  
The one of an inestimable worth,  
Made all their household. I may truly say,  
That they were as a proverb in the vale  
For endless industry. When day was gone,  
And from their occupations out of doors  
The Son and Father were come home, even then,  
The labour did not cease ; unless when all  
Turned to the cleanly supper-board, and there.  
Each with a mess of pottage and skimmed milk  
Sat round the basket piled with oaten cakes,  
And their plain home-made cheese. Yet when the meal  
Was ended, Luke (for so the Son was named)  
And his old Father both betook themselves  
To such convenient work as might employ  
Their hands by the fire side, perhaps to card  
Wool for the Housewife's spindle or repair  
Some injury done to sickle flail or scythe,  
Or other implement of house or field.

100

Down from the ceiling, by the chimney's edge, 110  
That in our ancient uncouth country style  
With huge and black projection overbrowed  
Large space beneath, as duly as the light  
Of day grew dim the Housewife hung a lamp ;  
An aged utensil, which had performed  
Service beyond all others of its kind.  
Early at evening did it burn and late,  
Surviving comrade of uncounted hours,  
Which going by from year to year, had found,  
And left, the couple neither gay perhaps 120  
Nor cheerful, yet with objects and with hopes,  
Living a life of eager industry  
And now, when Luke has reached his eighteenth year,  
There by the light of this old lamp they sate,



Father and Son, while far into the night  
The Housewife plied her own peculiar work,  
Making the cottage through the silent hours  
Murmur as with the sound of summer flies.  
This light was famous in its neighbourhood  
And was a public symbol of the life 130  
That thrifty Pair had lived. For, as it chanced,  
Their cottage on a plot of rising ground  
Stood single, with large prospect, north and south,  
High into Easedale, up to Dunmail Raise,  
And westward to the village near the lake;  
And from this constant light, so regular,  
And so far seen, the House itself, by all  
Who dwelt within the limits of the vale.  
Both old and young, was named THE EVENING STAR.

Thus living on through such a length of years, 140  
The Shepherd, if he loved himself must needs  
Have loved his Helpmate; but to Michael's heart  
This son of his old age was yet more dear  
Less from instinctive tenderness, the same  
Fond spirit that blindly works in the blood of all—  
Than that a child, more than all other gifts  
That earth can offer to declining man,  
Brings hope with it, and forward-looking thoughts,  
And stirring of inquietude, when they  
By tendency of nature needs must fail. 150  
Exceeding was the love he bare to him,  
His heart and his heart's joy ! For oftentimes,  
Old Michael while he was a babe in arms,  
Had done him female service, not alone  
For pastime and delight, as is the use  
Of fathers, but with patient mind enforced  
To act of tenderness; and he had rocked  
His cradle, as with a women's gentle hand.

And, in a later time, ere yet the Boy  
Had put on boy's attire, did Michael love,  
Albeit of a stern unbending mind,  
To have the Young-one in his sight, when he



Wrought in the field, or on his shepherd's stool  
Sate with a fettered sheep before him stretched  
Under the large old oak, that near his door  
Stood single, and from matchless depth of shade,  
Chosen for the Shearer's covert from the sun,  
Thence in our rustic dialect was called  
The CLIPPING TREE, a name which yet it bears.  
There, while they two were sitting in the shade,  
With others round them, earnest all and blithe,  
Would Michael exercise his heart with looks  
Of fond correction and reproof bestowed  
Upon the Child, if he disturbed the sheep  
By catching at their legs, or with his shouts  
Scared them, while they lay still beneath the shears.

And when by Heaven's good grace the boy grew up  
A healthy Lad, and carried in his cheek  
Two steady roses that were five years old ;  
Then Michael from a winter coppice cut.  
With his own hand a sapling, which he hooped  
With iron, making it throughout in all  
Due requisites a perfect shepherd's staff,  
And gave it to the Boy ; wherewith equipt  
He as a watchman oftentimes was placed  
At gate or gap, to stem or turn the flock ;  
And, to his office prematurely called,  
There stood the urchin, as you will divine,  
Something between a hindrance and a help ;  
And for this cause not always, I believe,  
Receiving from his Father hire of praise ;  
Though nought was left undone which staff, or voice,  
Or looks, or threatening gestures, could perform,

But soon as Luke, full ten years old, could stand  
Against the mountain blasts ; and to the heights,  
Not fearing toil, nor length of weary ways,  
He with his Father daily went, and they  
Were as companions, why should I relate  
That objects which the Shepherd loved before  
Were dearer now? that from the Boy there came



Feelings and emanations—thing which were  
Light to the sun and music to the wind ;  
And that the old Man's heart seemed born again ?

Thus is his father's sight the boy grew up :  
And now, when he had reached his eighteenth year,  
He was his comfort and his daily hope.

While in this sort the simple household lived  
From day to day, to Michael's ear their came  
Distressful tidings. Long before the time  
Of which I speak, the Shepherd had been bound 210

In surety for his brother's son, a man  
Of an industrious life, and ample means ;  
But unforeseen misfortunes suddenly  
Had prest upon him ; and old Michael now  
Was summoned to discharge the forfeiture,  
A grievous penalty, but little less  
Than half his substance. This unlooked for claim,  
At the first hearing, for a moment took  
More hope out of his life than he supposed  
That any old man ever could have lost. 220

As soon as he had armed himself with strength  
To look his trouble in the, it seemed  
The Shepherd's sole resource to sell at once  
A portion of his patrimonial fields  
Such was his first resolve ; he thought again,  
And his heart failed him. "Isabel," said he,  
Two evenings after he had heard the news,  
"I have been toiling more than seventy years,  
And in the open sunshine of God's love  
Have we all lived ; yet if these fields of ours 230  
Should pass into a stranger's hand, I think  
That I could not lie quiet in my grave.

Our lot is a hard ; the sun himself  
Has scarcely been more diligent than I ;  
And I have lived to be a fool at last  
To my own family. An evil man  
That was and made an evil choice, if he  
Were false to us ; and if he were not false,



There are ten thousand to whom loss like this  
Had been no sorrow. I forgive him—but  
'Twere better to be dumb than to talk thus.

“When I began, my purpose was to speak  
Of remedies and of a cheerful hope.  
Our Luke shall leave us, Isabel ; the land  
Shall not go from us, and it shall be free ;  
He shall pass it, free as is the wind  
That passes over it. We have, thou know'st  
Another kinsman—he will be our friend  
In this distress. He is a prosperous man,  
Thriving in trade—and Luke to him shall go.  
And with his kinsman's help and his own thrift  
He quickly will repair this loss and then  
He may return to us. If here he stay,  
What can be done ? Where every one is poor,  
What can be gained ?”

At this the old man paused.  
And Isabel sat silent, for her mind  
Was busy, looking back into past times.  
There's Richard Bateman, thought she to herself,  
He was a parish boy—at the church door  
They made a gathering for him, shillings, pence  
And half pennies, wherewith the neighbours bought  
A basket, which they filled with pedlar's wares ;  
And, with this basket on his arm the lad,  
Went up to London, found a master there,  
Who, out of many, chose the trusty boy  
To go and overlook his merchandise  
Beyond the seas ; where he grew wondrous rich,  
And left estates and monies to the poor,  
And, at his birth place, built a chapel, floored  
With marble which he sent from foreign lands.  
These thoughts, and many others of like sort,  
Passed quickly through the mind of Isabel,  
And her face brightend. The old Man was glad ;  
And thus resumed—: ‘Well, Isabel ’ this scheme  
These two days has been meat and drink to me.  
Far more than we have lost is left us yet



We have enough—I wish indeed that I  
Were younger ;—but this hope is a good hope.  
—Make ready Luke's best garments of the best  
Buy for him more, and let us send him forth  
To morrow, or the next day, or to-night :  
If he *could* go, the Boy should go to-night."

280

Here Michael ceased, and to the fields went forth  
With a light heart. The Housewife for five days  
Was restless morn and night, and all day long  
Wrought on with her best fingers to prepare  
Things needful for the journey of her son.  
But Isabel was glad when Sunday came  
To stop her in her work ; for, when she lay  
By Michael's side, she through the last two nights  
Heard him, how he was troubled in his sleep :  
And when they rose at morning she could see  
That all his hopes were gone. That day at noon  
She said to Luke, while they two by themselves  
Were sitting at the door, "Thou must not go :  
We have no other Child but thee to lose,  
None to remember-do not go away,  
For if thou leave thy Father he will die."  
The Youth made answer with a jocund voice :  
And Isabel, when she had told her fears,  
Recovered heart. That evening her best fare  
Did she bring forth, and all together sad  
Like happy people round a Christmas fire.

290

With daylight Isabel resumed her work ;  
And all the ensuing week the house appeared  
As cheerful as a grove in Spring : at length  
The expected letter from their kinsman came,  
With kind assurance that he would do  
His utmost for the welfare of the Boy ;  
To which, request were added, that forthwith  
He might be sent to him. Ten times or more  
The letter was read over ; Isabel  
Went forth to show it to the neighbours round ;  
Nor there at that time on English land

310



A prouder heart than Luke's. When Isabel  
Had to her house returned, the old Man said,  
"He shall depart to morrow." To this word  
The Housewife answered, talking much of things  
Which, if at such short notice he should go,  
Would surely be forgotten. But at length  
She gave consent and Michael was at ease.

320

Near the tumultuous brook of Green head Ghyll,  
In that deep valley, Michael had designed  
To build a Sheepfold ; and, before he heard  
The tidings of his melancholy loss,  
For this same purpose he had gathered up  
A heap of stones, which by the streamlet's edge  
Lay thrown together, ready for the work  
With Luke that evening thitherward he walked :  
And soon as they had reached the place he stopped, 330  
And thus the old Man spake to him—"My son,  
To-morrow thou wilt leave me : with full heart  
I look upon thee, for thou art the same  
That were a promise to me ere thy birth,  
And all thy life hast been my daily joy,  
I will relate to thee some little part  
Of our two histories ; 'twill do thee good  
When thou art from me, even if I should touch  
On things thou canst not know of.—After thou  
First cam'st into the world—as oft befalls 340  
To new-born infants—thou did'st sleep away  
Two days, and blessings from thy Father's tongue  
Then fell upon thee. Day by day passed on,  
And still I loved thee with increasing love.  
Never to living ear came sweeter sounds  
Than when I heard thee by our own fireside  
First uttering, without words, a natural tune ;  
While thou, a feeling babe, didst in thy joy  
Sing at thy Mother's breast. Month followed month,  
And in the open fields my life was passed 350  
And on the mountains ; else I think that thou  
Hadst been brought up upon thy Father's knees.  
But we were playmates, Luke : among these hills,  
As well thou knowest in us the old and young



Have played together, nor with me didst thou  
 Lack any pleasure which a boy can know."  
 Luke had a manly heart ; but at these words  
 He sobbed aloud. The old man grasped his hand,  
 And said, "Nay, do not take it so—I see  
 That these are things of which I need not speak. 360  
 —Even to the utmost I have been to thee  
 A kind and a good Father : and herein  
 I but repay a gift which I myself  
 Received at others' hands ; for, though now old  
 Beyond the common life of man, I still  
 Remember them who loved me in my youth.  
 Both of them sleep together : here they lived,  
 As all their Forefathers had done : and when  
 At length their time was come they were not loth  
 To give their bodies to the family mould. 370  
 I wished that thou should'st live the life they lived,  
 But, 'tis a long time to look back, my Son,  
 And see so little gain from threescore years.  
 These fields were burthened when they came to me ;  
 Till I was forty years of age, not more  
 Then half of my inheritance was mine.  
 I toiled and toiled God blessed me in my work,  
 And till these three weeks past the land was free.  
 —It looks as if it never could endure  
 Another Master. Heaven forgive me, Luke. 380  
 If I judge ill for thee, but it seems good  
 That thou should'st go."

At this the old Man paused ;  
 Then, pointing to the stones near which they stood,  
 Thus, after a short silence, he resumed :  
 "This was a work for us ; and now, my Son,  
 It is a work for me. But lay one stone—  
 Here, lay it for me, Luke, with thine own hands,  
 Nay, Boy, be of good hope :—we both may live  
 To see a better day. At eighty-four  
 I still am strong and hale ; do thou thy part ; 390  
 I will do mine. I will begin again  
 With many tasks that were resigned to thee :  
 Up to the heights, and in among the storms,



Will I without thee go again, and do  
All works which I was wont to do alone,  
Before I knew the face. Heaven bless thee Boy !  
Thy heart these two weeks has been beating fast  
With many hopes, it should be so—yes—yes—  
I knew that thou could'st never have a wish  
To leave, me, Luke : thou hast been bound to me 400  
Only by links of love : when thou art gone,  
What will be left to us !—But, I forget  
My purpose. Lay now the corner stone,  
As I requested ; and hereafter, Luke,  
When thou art gone away, should evil men  
Be thy companions think of me, my Son,  
And of this moment ; hither turn thy thoughts,  
And God will strengthen thee ; amid all fear  
And all temptation Luke, I pray that thou  
May'st bear in mind the life thy Fathers lived 410  
Who, being innocent, did for that cause  
Bestir them in good deeds. No, fare thee well—  
When thou return'st, thou in this place wilt see  
A work which is not here : a covenant  
'Twill be between us ; but, whatever fate  
Befall thee, I shall love thee to the last,  
And bear thy memory with me to the grave."

The Shepherd ended here ; and Luke stooped down,  
And, as his Father had requested, laid  
The first stone of the Sheepfold. At the sight 420  
The old Man's grief broke from him ; to his heart  
He pressed his Son, he kissed him and wept ;  
And to the house together they returned.  
—Hushed was that House in peace, or seeming peace,  
Ere the night fell—with morrow's dawn the Boy  
Began his journey and when he had reached  
The public way, he put on a bold face ;  
And all the neighbours, as he passed their doors,  
Came forth with wishes and with farewell prayers,  
That followed him till he was out of sight. 433

A good report did from their Kinsman come,  
Of Luke and his well-doing : and the Boy



Wrote loving letters full of wondrous news,  
Which, as the Housewife phrased it, were throughout  
"The prettiest letters that were ever seen."  
Both parents read them with rejoicing hearts.  
So, many months passed on: and once again  
The Shepherd went about his daily work  
With confident and cheerful thoughts; and now  
Sometimes when he could find a leisure hour 440  
He to that valley took his way, and there  
Wrought at the sheepfold. Meantime Luke began  
To slacken in his duty; and, at length,  
He in the dissolute city gave himself  
To evil courses: ignominy and shame  
Fell on him, so that he was driven at last  
To seek a hiding place beyond the seas.

There is a comfort in the strength of love;  
'Twill make a thing endurable, which else 450  
Would overset the brain, or break the heart:  
I have conversed with more than one who well  
Remember the old Man, and what he was  
Years after he had heard this heavy news.  
His bodily frame had been from youth to age  
Of an unusual strength. Among the rocks  
He went, and still looked up to sun and cloud,  
And listened to the wind and, as before,  
Performed all kinds of labour for his sheep,  
And for the land, his small inheritance.  
And to that hollow dell from time to time 460  
Did he repair, to build the Fold of which  
His flock had need. 'Tis not forgotten yet  
The pity which was then in every heart  
For the old Man—and 'tis believed by all  
That many and many a day he thither went,  
And never lifted up a single stone.

There, by the sheepfold, sometimes was he seen  
Sitting alone, or with his faithful Dog,  
Then old, beside him lying as his feet.  
The length of full seven years, from time to time, 704



He at the building of his Sheepfold wrought,  
And left the work unfinished when he died,  
Three years, or little more, did Isabel  
Survive her Husband : at her death the estate  
Was sold, and went into a stranger's hand  
The cottage which was named the EVENING STAR  
Is gone—the ploughshare has been through the ground  
On which it stood ; great changes have been wrought  
In all the neighbourhood : yet the oak is left  
That grew beside their door ; and the remains  
Of the unfinished Sheepfold may be seen  
Beside the boisterous brook of Green-head Ghyll.

480

*William Wordsworth.*

## XII

### LOVE

All thoughts all passions, all delights,  
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,  
All are but ministers of Love,  
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I  
Live o'er again that happy hour,  
When midway on the mount I lay  
Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,  
Had blended with the lights of eve ;  
And she was there, my hope, my joy,  
My own dear Genevieve !

10

She lean'd against the armed man,  
The statue of the armed knight ;  
She stood and listened to my lay,  
Amid the lingering light.



Few sorrows hath she of her own,  
My hope ! my joy ! my Genevieve !  
she loves me best, whenev'er I sing

20

The songs that make her grieve.  
I played a soft and doleful air,  
I sang an old and moving story—  
An old rude song, that suited well  
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,  
With downcast eyes and modest grace ;  
For well she knew, I could not choose  
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the Knight that wore  
Upon his shield a burning brand ;  
And that for ten long years he wooed  
The Lady of the Land.

30

I told her how he pined ; and ah !  
The deep, the low, the pleading tone  
With which I sang another's love,  
Interpreted my own.

She listened with flitting blush,  
With downcast eyes, and modest grace ;  
And she forgave me, that I gazed  
Too fondly on her face !

40

But when I told the cruel scorn  
That crazed that bold and lovely Knight,  
And that he crossed the mountain woods,  
Nor rested day nor night ;

That sometimes from the savage den,  
And sometimes from the darksome shade  
And sometimes starting up at once  
In green and sunny glade,—



There came and looked him in the face  
An angel beautiful and bright ;  
And that he knew it was Fiend,  
This miserable Knight !

50

And that unknowing what he did,  
He leaped amid a murderous band,  
And saved from outrage worse than death  
The Lady of the land;—

And how she wept, and clasped his knees :  
And how she tended him in vain ;  
And ever strove to expiate  
The scorn that crazed his brain ;—

60

And that she nurshed him in a cave ;  
And how his madness went away,  
When on the yellow forest-leaves  
A dying man he lay ;

His dying words—but when I reached  
That tenderest strain of all the ditty,  
My faltering voice and pausing harp  
Disturbed her soul with pity !

All impulses of soul and sense  
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve ;  
The music and the doleful tale,  
The rich and balmy eve ;

70

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,  
An undistinguishable throng,  
And gentle wishes long subdued,  
Subdued and cherished long !

She wept with pity and delight,  
She blushed with love, and virgin shame ;  
And like the murmur of a dream,  
I heard her breathe my name.

80



Her bosom heaved—she stepped aside,  
As conscious of my look she tp—  
Then suddenly, with timorous eye  
She fled to me and wept.

She half enclosed me with her arms,  
She press'd me with a meek embrace ;  
And bending back her head, looked up,  
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,  
And partly 'twas a bashful art,  
That I might rather feel, than see,  
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,  
And told her love with virgin pride ;  
And so I won my Genevieve,  
By bright and beauteous Bride.

*Samuel Taylor Coleridge*

### XIII

#### THE OCEAN

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,  
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,  
There is society, where none intrudes,  
By the deep Sea, and music in its roar :  
I love not Man the less, but Nature more,  
From these our interviews, in which I steal  
From all I may be, or have been before,  
To mingle with the Universe, and feel  
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot conceal.

Roll on, thou deep and dark blue Ocean—roll !  
Ten thousand fleets sweep over thee in vain ;



Man marks the earth with ruin—his control  
Stops with the shore ; upon the watery plain  
The wrecks are all thy deed, nor doth remain  
A shadow of man's ravage, save his own,  
When, for a moment, like a drop of rain,  
He sinks into thy depths with bubbling groan,  
Without a grave, unknell'd, uncoffin'd, and unknown.

His steps are not upon thy paths,—thy fields  
Are not a spoil for him,—thou dost arise  
And shake him from thee ; the vile strength he wields  
For earth's destruction thou dost all despise,  
Spurning him from thy bosom to the skies,  
And send'st him, shivering in thy playful spray  
And howling, to his gods, where haply lies  
His petty hope in some near port or bay,  
and dashest him again to earth—there let him lay.

The armaments which thunderstrike the walls  
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake,  
And monarchs tremble in their capitals,  
The oak leviathans, whose huge ribs make  
Their clay creator the vain title take  
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of war—  
These are they toys, and, as the snowy flake,  
They melt into thy yeast of waves, which mar  
Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.

Thy shores are empires, changed in all save thee—  
Assyria, Greece, Rome, Carthage, what are they ?  
Thy waters wash'd them power while they were free,  
And many a tyrant since; their shores obey  
The stranger, slave, or savage ; their decay  
Has dried up realms to deserts : not so thou—  
Unchangeable save to thy wild waves' play—  
Time writes no wrinkle on thine azure brow ;  
Such as creation's dawn beheld, thou rollest now.

Thou glorious mirror, where the Almighty's form  
Glasses itself in tempests ; in all time  
Calm or convulsed—in breeze, or storm,



Icing the pole, or in the torrid clime  
Dark heaving—boundless, endless, and sublime, 50  
The image of eternity—the throne  
Of the Invisible ; even from out thy slime  
The monsters of the deep are made ; each zone  
Obeys thee ; thou goest forth, dread, fathomless, alone

And I have loved thee, Ocean ! and my joy  
Of youthful sports was on thy breast to be  
Borne, like thy bubbles, onward : from a boy  
I wanton'd with thy breakers—they to me  
Were a delight ; and if the freshening sea  
Made them a terror—'twas a pleasing fear, 60  
For I was as it were a child of thee,  
And trusted to thy billows far and near,  
And laid my hand upon thy mane—as I do here.

*George Gordon, Lord Byron*

#### XIV

#### TO A SKYLARK

Hail to thee, blithe Spirit !  
Bird thou never wert,  
That from Heaven or near it,  
Pourest thy full heart  
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher  
From the earth though springest  
Like a cloud of fire ;  
The blue deep thou wingest,  
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest. 10



In the golden lightning  
Of the sunken sun,  
O'er which clouds are bright'ning,  
Thou dost float and run ;  
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.

The pale purple even  
Melts around thy flight ;  
Like a star of Heaven,  
In the broad daylight  
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight, 20

Keen as are the arrows  
Of that silver sphere,  
Whose intense lamp narrows  
In the white dawn clear  
Until we hardly see—we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air  
With thy voice is loud,  
As, when night is bare,  
From one lonely cloud  
The moon rains out her beams, and Heaven is over-flow'd. 30

What thou art we know not ;  
What is most like thee ?  
From rainbow clouds there flow not  
Drops so bright to see  
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a Poet hidden  
In the light of thought,  
Singing hymns unbidden,  
Till the world is wrought  
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not 40

Like a high-born maiden  
In a palace tower,  
Soothing her love-laden  
Soul in secret hour  
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower :



Like a glow—worm golden  
In a dell of dew,  
Scattering un beholden  
Its aerial huc  
Among the flowers and grass and which screen it from the  
view ! 50

Lie a rose embowered  
In its own leaves,  
By warm winds deflower'd,  
Till the scent it gives  
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-winged  
thieves :

Sound of vernal showers  
On the twinkling grass,  
Rain-awaken'd flowers.  
All that ever was  
Joyous and clear and fresh, thy music doth surpass : 60

Teach us, Sprite or Bird,  
What sweet thoughts are thine :  
I have never heard  
Praise of love or wine  
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus Hymeneal,  
Or triumphal chant,  
Match'd with thine would be all  
But an empty vaunt,  
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want. 70

What objects are the fountains  
Of thy happy strain ?  
What fields, or waves, or mountains ?  
What shapes of sky or plain ?  
What love of thine own kind ? what ignorance of pain ?

With thy clear keen joyance  
Languor cannot be :  
Shadow of annoyance  
Never came near thee :  
Thou lovest—but ne'er knew love's sad satiety. 80



Waking or asleep,  
Thou of death must deem  
Things more true and deep  
Than we mortals dream,  
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream ?

We look before and after,  
And pine for what is not  
Our sincerest laughter  
With some pain is fraught ;  
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought. 90

Yet, if we could scorn  
Hate and pride and fear ;  
If we were things born  
Not shed a tear,  
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures  
Of delightful sound,  
Better than all treasures  
That in books are found,  
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground ! 100

Teach me half the gladness  
That thy brain must know,  
Such harmonious madness  
From my lips would flow  
The world should listen then—as I am listening now.

*Percy Bysshe Shelley*

## XV

### THE CLOUD

I bring fresh showers for the thirsting flowers,  
From the seas and the streams,  
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid  
In their noonday dreams.



From my wings are shaken the dews that waken  
The sweet buds every one,  
When rocked to rest on their mother's breast,  
As she dances about the sun.  
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,  
And whiten the green plains under,  
And then again I dissolve it in rain,  
And laugh as I pass in thunder.

I sift the snow on the mountains below,  
And their great pines groan aghast ;  
And all the night tis my pillow white,  
While I sleep in the arms of the blast.  
sublime on the towers of my skyey bowers,  
Lightning my pilot sits ;  
In a cavern under is fettered the thunder,  
It struggles and howls at fits ;  
Over earth and ocean, with gentle motion,  
This pilot is guiding me,  
Lured by the love of the genii that move  
In the depth of the purple sea ;  
Over the rills, and the crags, and the hills.  
Over the lakes and the plains,  
Wherever he dream, under mountain or stream,  
The Spirit he loves remains ;  
And I all the while bask in Heaven's blue smile.  
Whist he is dissolving in rains.

The sanguine Sunrise, with his meteor eyes,  
And his burning plumes outspread,  
Leaps on the back of my sailing rack,  
When the morning star shines dead ;  
As on the jag of a mountain crag, 35  
Which an earthquake rocks and swings,  
An eagle alit one moment may sit  
In the light of its golden wings,  
And when Sunset may breathe, from the lit sea beneath,  
Its ardours of rest and of love 40  
And the crimson pall of eve may fall  
From the depth of Heaven above,



With wings folded I rest, on mine airy nest,  
As still as a brooding dove.

That orb'd maiden with white fire laden,  
Whom mortals call the Moon,  
Glides glimmering o'er my fleece-like floor,  
By the midnight breezes strewn ;  
And whenever the beat of her unseen feet,  
Which only the angles hear  
May have broken the woof of my tent's thin roof,  
The stars peep behind her and peer ;  
And I laugh to see them whirl and flee,  
Like a swarm of golden bees  
When I widen the rent in my wind-built tent,  
Till the calm rivers, lakes and seas,  
Like strips of the sky fallen through me on high,  
Are each paved with the moon and these.

I bind the Sun's throne with a burning zone,  
And the Moon's with a girdle of pearl ;  
The volcanoes are dim, and the stars reel and swim  
When the whirlwinds my banner unfurl.  
From cape to cape, with a bridge-like shape,  
Over a torrent sea,  
Sunbeam-proof, I hang like a roof  
The mountains its columns be.  
The triumphal arch, through which I march  
With hurricane, fire and snow,  
When the powers of the air are chained to my chair,  
Is the million coloured bow ;  
The sphere fire above its soft colours wove,  
While the moist Earth was laughing below,

I am the daughter of Earth and Water,  
And the nurshing of the Sky ;  
I pass through the pores of the ocean and shores,  
I change, but I cannot die.  
For afloat the rain when with never a stain  
The pavilion of Heaven is bare,



And the winds and sunbeams with their convex gleams  
Build up the blue dome of air, 80  
I silently laugh at my own centoaph,  
And out of the caverns of rain,  
Like a child from the womb, like a ghost from the tomb,  
I arise and unbuild it again.

*Percy Bysshe Shelley*

## XVI

### TO AUTUMN

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun ;  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run ;  
To bend with apples the mossed cottage-trees,  
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core ;  
To swell the gound, and plump the hazel shells  
With a sweet kenel ; to set budding more,  
And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
Until they think warm days will never cease, 10  
For summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy  
cells.

Who hath not seen the oft amid thy store ?  
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find  
Thee sitting careless on a granary-floor,  
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind ;  
Or on a half reap'd furrow sound asleep,  
Drowsed with the fume of poppies, while thy hook  
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers ;  
And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep  
Steady thy laden head across a brook ;  
Or by a cider-press, with patient look, 20  
Thou watchest the last ooziings hours by hours.



Where are the songs of Spring ? Ay, where are they ?  
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too—  
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,  
And touch the stubble plains with rosy hue ;  
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn  
Among the river salallows, borne aloft  
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies ;  
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn ;  
Hedge-cricket sing ; and now with treble soft  
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,  
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies

*John Keats*

## XVII

### LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI

1

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms !  
Alone and palely loitering !  
The sedge has withered from the lake,  
And no birds sing.

2

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms !  
So haggard and so woe-begone ?  
The squirrel's granary is full,  
And the harvest's done.

3

I see a lily on thy brow  
With anguish moist and fever dew,  
And on thy cheeks a fading rose  
Fast withereth too.

40



"I met a lady in the meads,  
Full beautiful—a faery's child,  
Her hair was long, her foot was light,  
And her eyes were wild.

5

"I made a garland for her head,  
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;  
She look'd at me as she did love,  
And made sweet moan.

20

6

"I set her on my pacing steed,  
And nothing else saw all day long  
For sidelong would she bend, and sing  
A faery's song.

7

'She found me roots of relish sweet,  
And honey wild and, manna dew;  
And sure in language strange she said,  
'I love thee true.

8

"She took me to her elfin grot,  
And there she wept, and sighed full sore;  
And there I shut her wild eyes  
With kisses four

30

9

"And there she lulled me asleep,  
And there I dream'd—Ah! woe betide!—  
The latest dream I ever dream'd cut  
On the cold hill side.



"I saw pale kings and princes too,  
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all :  
They cried. 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci  
Hath three in thrall !'

"I saw their starved lips in the gloam,  
With horrid warning gaped wide,  
And I awoke and found me here  
On the cold hill-side.

"And that is why I sojourn here,  
Alone and palely loitering,  
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,  
And no birds sing."

*John Keate*

## XVIII

### THE SONG OF THE SHIRT

"With fingers weary and worn,  
With eyelids heavy and red,  
A woman sat in unwomanly rags,  
Plying her needle and thread—  
Stitch ! stitch !  
In poverty, hunger, and dirt,  
And still with a voice of dolorous pitch  
She sang the "Song of the Shirt,"

"Work ! work ! work !  
While the cock is crowing aloof !  
And work—work—work,



- Till the stars shine through the roof ! 12  
 It's Oh ! to be a slave  
 Along with the barbarous Turk,  
 Where women has never a soul to save, 16  
 If this is Christian work.
- "Work—work—work,  
 Till the brain begins to swim;  
 Work—work—work, 20  
 Till the eyes are heavy and dim !  
 Seam, and gusset, and band,  
 Band, and gusset, and seam,  
 Till over the button I fall asleep,  
 And sew them on in a dream ! 24
- "Oh ! men with sisters dear !  
 Oh ! men with mothers and wives !  
 It is not linen you're wearing out 28  
 But human creatures' lives !  
 Stitch—stitch stitch.  
 In poverty, hunger and dirt,  
 Swing at once with a double thread 32  
 A Shroud as well as a Shirt.
- "But why do I talk of Death ?  
 That phantom of grisly bone,  
 I hardly fear his terrible shape, 36  
 It seems so like my own—  
 It seems so like my own,  
 Because of the fasts I keep ;  
 O God ! that bread should be so dear,  
 And flesh and blood so cheap ! 40
- "Work—work—work !  
 My labour never flags ;  
 And what are its wages ? A bed of straw,  
 A crust of bread and rags.  
 That shattered roof,—this naked floor—  
 A table a broken chair—  
 And a wall so blank, my shadow I thank 49  
 For sometimes falling there !



“Work—work—work !  
From weary chime to chime,  
Work—work—work,  
As prisoners work for crime !  
Band and gusset, and seam,  
Seam, and gusset, and band,  
Till the heart is sick, and the brain benumbed,  
As well as they weary hand.

“Work—work—work,  
In the dull December light,  
And work—work—work,  
When the weather is warm and bright—  
While underneath the eaves  
The brooding swallows cling  
As if to show me their sunny backs  
And twit me with the spring.

“Oh ! but to breathe the breath  
Of the cowslip and primrose sweet—  
With the sky above my head,  
And the grass beneath my feet ;  
For only one short hour  
To feel as I used to feel,  
Before I knew the woes of want  
And the walk that costs a meal,

“Oh ! but for one short hour !  
A respite however brief !  
No blessed leisure for love or hope,  
But only time for grief !  
A little weeping would ease my heart,  
But in their briny bed  
My tears must stop, for every drop  
Hinders needle and thread !”

Seam, and gusset, and band,  
Band and gusset, and seam,  
Work—work—work,  
Like the engine that works by steam !



A mere machine of iron and wood  
 That toils for Mammon's sake,  
 Without a brain to ponder and craze  
 Or a heart to feel—and break ! 88

With fingers weary and worn,  
 With eyelids heavy and red,  
 A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,  
 Plying her needle and thread— 92  
 Stitch ! stitch ! stitch !

In poverty, hunger, and dirt,  
 And still with a voice of dolorous pitch,— 95  
 Would that its tone could reach the rich !— 96  
 She sang this 'Song of the Shirt !'

*Thomas Hood*

## XIX

### UNDYING LOVE

Love, dearest lady, such as I would speak,  
 Lives not within the humour of the eye ;  
 Not being but an outward phantasy,  
 That skims the surface of a tinted cheek,—  
 Else it would wane with beauty, and grow weak,  
 As if the rose made summer,—and so lie  
 Amongst the perishable things that die,  
 Unlike the love which I would give and seek :  
 Whose health is of no hue—to feel decay 10  
 With cheeks' decay, that have a rosy prime.  
 Love is its own great loveliness always,  
 And takes new lustre from the touch of time ;  
 Its bough owns no December and no May,  
 But bears its blossom into Winter's clime.

*Thomas Hood*



## RING OUT, WILD BELLS

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
 The flying cloud, the frosty light ;  
 The year is dying in the night ;  
 Ring, out, wild bells, and let him die.

Ring out the old, ring in the new,  
 Ring, happy bells, across the snow :  
 The year is going, let him go ;  
 Ring out the false, ring in the true. 5

Ring out the grief that saps to mind,  
 For those that here we see no more ;  
 Ring out the feud of rich and poor,  
 Ring in redress to all mankind. 10

Ring out a slowly dying cause,  
 And ancient forms of party strife ;  
 Ring in the nobler modes of life,  
 With sweeter manners, purer laws. 15

Ring out the want, the care, the sin,  
 The faithless coldness of the times ;  
 Ring out, ring out my mournful rhymes,  
 But ring the fuller minstrel in. 20

Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
 The civic slander and the spite ;  
 Ring in the love of truth and right,  
 Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shoppes of foul disease ;  
 Ring out the narrowing lust of gold ;  
 Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
 Ring in the thousand years of peace. 25



Ring in the valiant man and free;  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.

30

*Alfred, Lord Tennyson*

## XXI

### THE PASSING OF ARTHUR

Then saw they how there hove a dusky barge,  
Dark as a funeral scarf from stem to stern,  
Beneath them; and descending they were ware  
That all the decks were dense with stately forms,  
Black-stoled, black-hooded, like a dream—by these  
Three Queens with crowns of gold—and from them rose  
A cry that shiver'd to the tingling stars,  
And, as it were one voice, an agony  
Of lamentation, like a wind that shrills  
All night in a waste land, where no one comes,  
Or hath comes since the making of the world.

10

Then murmur'd Arthur, "Place me in the barge,"  
And to the barge they came. There those three Queens  
Put forth their hands, and took the King, and wept.  
But she, that rose the tallest of them all  
And fairest, laid his head upon her lap,  
And loosed the shatter'd casque, and chafed his hands,  
And call'd him by his name, complaining loud,  
And dropping bitter tears against his brow  
Striped with dark blood : for all his face was white  
And colourless, and like the wither'd moon  
Smote by the fresh beam of the springing east ;  
And all his greaves and cuisses dash'd with drops  
Of onset ; and the light and lustrous curls—  
That made his forehead like a rising sun  
High from the dais throne—were parch'd with dust;

20



Or, clotted into points and hanging loose,  
Mix'd with the knightly growth that fringed his lips.  
So like a shatter'd column lay the King ;  
Not like that Arthur who, with lance in rest,  
From spur to plume a star of tournament,  
Shot through the lists at Camelot, and charged  
Before the eyes of ladies and of kings.

30

Then loudly cried the bold Sir Bedivere ;  
“Ah my Lord Arthur, whither shall I go ?  
Where shall I hide my forehead and my eyes ?  
For now I see the true old times are dead,  
When every morning brought a noble chance,  
And every chance brought out a noble knight.  
Such times have been not since the light that led  
The holy Elders with the gift of myrrh.  
But now the whole ROUND TABLE is dissolved  
Which was an image of the mighty world ;  
And I, the last, go forth companionless,  
And the days darken round me, and the years,  
Among new men, strange faces, other minds.”

40

And slowly answer'd Arthur from the barge :  
“The old order changeth, yielding place to new,  
And God fulfils Himself in many ways,  
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.  
Comfort thyself : what comfort is in me ?  
I have lived my life, and that which I have done  
May He within Himself make pure ! but thou,  
If thou shouldst never see my face again,  
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer  
Than this world deems of Wherefore let thy voice  
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.  
For what are men better than sheep or goats  
That nourish a blind life within the brain.  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer  
Both for themselves and those who call them friend ?

50

60



For so the whole round earth is every way  
 Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.  
 But now farewell. I am going a long way  
 With these thou seest if indeed I go—  
 (For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)—  
 To the island-valley of Avilion ;  
 Where falls not hail, or rain or any snow,  
 Nor ever wind blows loudly ; but it lies  
 Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns 70  
 And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,  
 Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."  
 So said he, and the barge with oar and sail  
 Moved from the brink, like some full breasted  
 swan

That, fluting a wild carol ere her death,  
 Ruffles her pure cold plume, and takes the flood  
 With swarthy webs. Long stood Sir Bedivere  
 Revolving many memories, till the hull  
 Looked one black dot against the verge of dawn,  
 And on the mere the wailing died away. 80

*Alfred, Lord Tennyson*

## XXII

### THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN

#### I

Hamelin Town's in Brunswick,  
 By famous Hanover city ;  
 The river Weser, deep and wide,  
 Washes its wall on the southern side  
 A pleasanter spot you never spied ;  
 But, when begins my ditty,  
 Almost five hundred years ago,  
 To see the townsfolk suffer so  
 From vermin, was a pity



## II

Rats !

They faught the dogs and killed the cats,  
And bit the babies in the cradles,  
And ate the cheeses out of the vats,  
And licked the soup from the cook's own ladles,  
Split open the kegs of salted sprats,  
Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,  
And even spoiled the women's chats,  
By drowning their speaking  
With shrieking and squeaking  
In fifty different sharps and flats.

## III

At last the people in a body  
To the Town Hall came flocking :  
" 'Tis clear" cried they, "our Mayors a noddy ;  
And as for our corporation—shocking  
To think we buy gowns lined with ermine  
For dolts that can't ur won't determine !  
What's best to rid us of our vermin !  
You hope, because you're old and obese ;  
To find in the furry civic robe ease ?  
Rouse up sirs ! Give your brains a racking  
To find the remedy we're lacking,  
Or, sure as fate, we'll send you packing !"  
At this the Mayor and Corporation  
Quaked with a mighty consternation.

## IV

An hour they sate in Council ;  
At length the Mayor broke silence ;  
"For a guilder I'd my ermine gown sell ;  
I wish I were a mile hence !  
It's easy to bid one rack one's brain—  
I'm sure my poor head aches again.  
I've scratched it so, and all in vain.  
Oh for a trap, a trap a trap. !



Just as he said this, what should hap  
At the chamber-door but a gentle tap ?  
"Bless us," cried the Mayor, what's that ?"  
(With the Corporation as he sat,  
Looking little though wondrous fat ;  
Nor brighter was his eye, nor moister  
Than a too-long opened oyster,  
Save when at noon his paunch grew mutinous  
For a plate of turtle green and glutinous)  
"Only a scraping of shoes on the mat !  
Anything like the sound of a rat  
Makes my heart go pit a-pat !"

50

## V

"Come in !" — the Mayor cried, looking bigger :  
And in did come the strangest figure !  
His queer long coat from heel to head  
Was half of yellow and half of red,  
And he himself was tall and thin,  
With sharp blue eyes, each like a pin,  
And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin,  
No tuft on cheek nor beard on chin,  
But lips where smiles went out and in—  
There was no guessing his kith and kin !  
And nobody could enough admire  
The tall man and his quaint attire.  
Quoth one : "It's as my great grandsire,  
Starting up at the Trump of Doom's tone,  
Had walked this way from his painted tombstone"

60

## VI

He advance to the council-table :  
And, "Please your honours," said he, "I'm able.  
By means of a secret charm, to draw  
All creatures living beneath the sun,  
That creep or swim or fly or run,  
After me so as you never saw !  
And I chiefly use my charm  
On creatures that do people harm,—

70



The mole the toad the newt the viper :  
And people call me the Pied Piper.”  
‘And here they noticed-round his neck  
A scarf of red and yellow stripe,  
To match with his coat of the self—same check ;  
And at the scarf’s end hung a pipe ;  
And his fingers they noticed, were ever straying  
As if impatient to be playing  
Upon this pipe, as low it dangled  
Over his vesture so old fangled.)  
“Yet,” said he, “poor piper as a I am,  
In Tartary I freed the Cham,  
Last June from his huge swarm of gnats;  
I eased in Asia the Nizam  
Of a monstrous brood of vampire-bats :  
And as for what your brain bewilders,  
If I can rid your town of rats  
Will you give me a thousand guilders ?”  
“One ! fifty thousand !” was the exclamation  
Of the astonished Mayor and Corporation.

## VII

Into the street the Piper stept,  
Smiling first a little smile  
As if he knew what magic slept  
In the quiet pipe the while ;  
Then, like a musical adept,  
To blow the pipe his lips he wrinkled,  
And green and blue his sharp eyes twinkled ;  
Like a candle flame where salt is sprinkled ;  
And ere three shrill notes the pipe uttered,  
You heard as if an army muttered ;  
And the muttering grew to a grumbling ;  
And the grumbling grew to mighty rumbling ;  
And out of the houses the rats came tumbling,  
Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,  
Brown rats, black rats, grey rats, tawny rats,  
Grave old plodders gay young friskers,  
Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,  
Cocking tails and pricking whiskers,  
Families by tens and dozens,



Brothers; sisters, husbands, wives—

Followed the Piper for their lives.

From street to street he piped advancing,

And step for step they followed dancing,

Until they came to the river Weser

120

Where in all plunged and perished

—Save one who stout as Julius Caesar,

Swam across and lived to carry

(As he the manuscript he cherished)

To Rat—land home his commentary :

Which was 'At the first shrill notes of the pipe,

I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,

And putting apples, wondrous ripe,

Into a cider press's gripe :

130

And a moving away of pickle-tub boards,

And a leaving ajar of conserve-cupboards,

And a drawing the corks of train-oil flasks,

And a breaking the hoops of butter casks :

And it seemed as if a voice

(Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery !

Is breathed) called out 'Oh rats rejoice !

The world is grown to one vast drysaltry !

So munch on crunch on take your nuncheon,

Breakfast supper dinner luncheon !

And just as a bulky sugar puncheon,

140

All ready staved like a great sun shone

Glorious scarce an inch before me,

Just as methought it said, 'Come bore me !'

—I found the Weser rolling o'er me"

## VIII

You should have heard the Hamelin people

Ring the bells till they rocked the steeple ;

'Go,' cried the Mayor, and get long poles !

Poke out the nests and block up the holes !

Consult with carpenters and builders.

150

And leave our town not even a trace

Of the rats !" when suddenly, up the face

Of the Piper perked in market-place

With a, "First, if you please, my thousand guilders !"



## IX

A thousand guilders ! The Mayor looked blue ;  
 So did the Corporation too.  
 For council dinners made rare havoc  
 With Claret, Moselle, Vin de Grave, Hock ;  
 And half the money would replenish.  
 Their cellar's biggest butt with Rhenish.  
 To pay this sum to a wandering fellow  
 With a gipsy coat of red and yellow !  
 "Beside," quoth the Mayor with a knowing wink,  
 "Our business was done at the river brink ;  
 We saw with our eyes the vermin sink,  
 And what's dead can't come to life, I think.  
 So, friend, we're not the folks to shrin  
 From the duty of giving you something for drink,  
 And a matter of money to put in your poke ;  
 But, as for the guilders what we spoke ;  
 Of them, as you very well know, was in joke.  
 Beside, our losses have made us thrifty.  
 A thousand guilders ! Come take fifty !"

## X

The Piper's face fell, and he cried  
 "No trifling ! I can't wait beside !  
 I've promised to visit by dinner time  
 Bagdat, and accept the prime  
 Of the Head-Cook's pottage, all he's rich in,  
 For having left, in the Caliph's kitchen,  
 Of a nest of scorpions no survivor :  
 With him I proved no bargain driver,  
 With you, don't think I'll bate a stiver !  
 And folk who put me in a passion  
 May find me pipe after another fashion."

## XI

"How ?" cried the Mayor. "d'ye think I brook  
 Being worse treated than a cook ?"



Insulted by a lazy ribald  
With idle pipe and vesture piebald ?  
You threaten us, fellow ? Do your worst ;  
Blow your pipe there till you burst !"

190

## XII

Once more he stept into the street  
And to his lips again  
Laid his long pipe of smooth straight cane ;  
And ere he blew three notes (such sweet  
Soft notes as yet musician's cunning  
Never gave the enraptured air)  
There was a rustling that seemed like a bustling  
Of merry crowds jostling at pitching, and hustling  
Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes clattering,  
Little hands clapping and little tongues chattering, 200  
And, like fowls in a farm yard when barley is scattering,  
Out came children raring.  
All the little boys and girls,  
With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,  
And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls.  
Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after  
The wonderful music with shouting and laughter.

## XIII

The Mayor was dumb, and the Council stood  
As if they were changed into blocks of wood,  
Unable to move a step, to cry 210  
To the children merrily skipping by,  
—Could only follow with the eye  
That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.  
But how the Mayor was on the rack,  
And the wrtched Council's bosoms beat,  
As the Piper turned from the High Street  
To where the Weser rolled its waters  
Right in the way of their sons and daughters !  
However he turned from South to West,  
And to Koppelberg Hills his steps addressed, 220  
And after him the children pressed ;



Great was the joy in every breast.  
 "He never can cross that mighty top !  
 He's forced to let the piping drop,  
 And we shall see our children stop !"  
 When, lo, as they reached the mountain side,  
 A wondrous portal opened wide,  
 As if cavern was suddenly hollowed ;  
 And the Piper advanced and the children followed,  
 And when all were in to the very last. 23)  
 The door in the mountain side shut fast.  
 Did I say, all ? No ! One was lame,  
     And could not dace the whole of the way ;  
 And in after years, if you would blame  
     His sadness, he was used to say—  
 "It's dull in our town since my plymates left !  
 I can't forget that I m bereft  
 Of all the pleasent sights they see,  
 Which the Piper also promised me :  
 For he led us, he said, to a joyous land, 240  
 Joining the town and just at hand,  
 Where waters gushed and fruit-trees grew,  
 And flowers put forth a fairer hue,  
 And everything was strange and new ;  
 The spartow were brighter than peacoks here,  
 And their dogs out ran our fallow deer,  
 And honey-bees had lost their stings,  
 And horses were born with eagles :  
 And just as I became assured  
 My lame foot would be speedily cured, 250  
 The music stopped, and I stood still,  
 And found myself outside the hill,  
 Left alone against my will,  
 To go now limping as before,  
 And never hear of that country more !"

#### XIV

Alas alas for Hamelin !  
 There came into many a burgher's pate  
 A text which says, that heaven's gate



Opes the rich at as easy rate  
As the needle's eye takes a camel in !  
The Mayor sent East, West, North and South,  
To offer the Piper, by word of mouth.

260

Wherever it was men's lot to find him,  
Silver and gold to his heart's content,  
If held only return the way he went,  
And bring the children behind him.

But when they saw twas a lost endeavour,  
And piper and dancers were gone for ever,  
They made a decree that lawyers never  
Should think their records dated duly

270

If, after the day of the month and year,  
These words did not as well appear,  
"And so long after what happened here

On the twenty-second of July,  
Thirteen hundred and seventy six :"  
And the better in memory to fix

The place of the children's last retreat,  
They called it, the Pied Piper's Street—  
Where any one playing on pipe or tabor  
Was sure for the future to lose his labour

280

Nor suffered they hostelry or tavern  
To shock with mirth a street so solemn ;  
But opposite the place of the cavern

They wrote the story on a column,  
And on the great church window painted  
The same, to make the world acquainted  
How their children were stolen away ;  
And there it stands this very day.

And I must not omit to say  
That in Transylvania there's a tribe  
Of alien people who ascribe

290

The outlandish ways and dress  
On which their neighbours lay such stress,  
To their fathers and mothers having risen  
Out of some subterraneous prison  
Into which they were trepanned  
Long time ago in a mighty band  
Out of pamelin town in Baunswick land,  
But how or why, they don't understand.



So, whilly, let you and me be wipers  
Of scores out with all men—especially pipers :  
And, whether they pipe us free from rats or from mice,  
If we've promised them aught, let us keep our promise !  
Robert Browning

300

## XXIII

### AMBROSE

Never, surely, was holier man  
Than Ambrose, since the world began ;  
With diet spare and raiment thin,  
He shielded himself from the father of sin  
W(th bed of iron and scourgings oft,  
His heart to God's hand as wax made soft.

Through earnest prayer and watchings long  
He sought to know 'twixt right and wrong,  
Much wrestling with the blessed Word  
To make it yield the sense of the Lord,  
That he might build a strom-proof creed  
To fold the flock in at their need.

10

At last he builded a perfect faith,  
Fenced round about with *The Lord thus saith* :  
To himself he fitted the doorway's size,  
Meted the light to the need of his eyes,  
And knew, by a sure and inward sign,  
That the work of his fingers was divine.

Then Ambrose said, "All those shall die  
The eternal death who believe not as I ;"  
And somewere boiled, some burned in fire,  
Some swan in twain, that his heart's desire,  
For the good of men's souls might be satisfied,  
By the drawing of all of the righteous side,

20



One day, as Ambrose was seeking the truth  
In his lonely walk, he saw a youth  
Resting himself in the shade of a tree ;  
It had never been given him to see  
So shining a face, and the good man thought  
'Twere pity he should not believe as he ought. 30

So he set himself by the young man's side,  
And the state of his soul with questions tried ;  
But the heart of the stranger was hardened indeed,  
Nor received the stamp of the true creed ;  
And the spirit of Ambrose wazed sore to find  
Such face the porch of so narrow a mind.

"As each beholds in cloud and fire  
The shape that answers his own desire,  
So each," said the youth, "in the Law shall find  
The figure and features of his mind ; 40  
And to each in His mercy hath God allowed  
His several pillar of fire and cloud."

The of Ambrose burned with zeal  
And holy wrath for the young man's weal :  
"Believest thou then, most wretched youth,  
Cried he, "a dividual essence in Truth ?  
I fear me thy heart is too cramped with sin  
To take the Lord in His glory in."

Now there bubbled beside them where they stood,  
A fountain of waters sweet good ; 50  
The youth to the streamlet's brink drew near  
Saying, "Ambrose, thou maker of creeds, look here !"  
Six vases of crystal then he took,  
And set them along the edge of the brook.

"As into these vessels the water I pour,  
There shall one hold less, another more,  
And the water unchanged, in every case,  
Shall put on the figure of the vase ;  
O thou, who wouldst unity make through strife,  
Canst thou fit this sign to the Water of Life ?" 60



When Ambrose looked up, he stood alone,  
The youth and the stream and the vases were gone,  
But he knew, by a sense of humble grace,  
He had talked with an angel face to face,  
And felt his heart change inwardly,  
As he fell on his knees beneath the tree.

*John Russell Lowell.*

## XXIV

### THE LIGHT OF ASIA

(AN EXTRACT)

Marvelled, and gave command that new delights  
Be compassed to enthral Siddartha's heart  
Amid those dancers of his pleasure-house ;  
Also he set all the brazen doors  
A double guard.

But the sad King

Yet who shall shut out Fate !

For once again the spirit of the Prince  
Was moved to see this world beyond his gates,  
This life of man, so pleasant, if its waves  
Ran not to waste and woful finishing  
In Tim's dry sands. "I pray you let me view  
Our city as it is," such was his prayer  
To King Suddhodana. "Your Majesty  
In tender heed hath warned the folk before  
To put away ill things and common sights,  
And make their faces glad to gladden me,  
This is not daily life, and if I stand  
Tearest, my father, to the realm and thee,  
Fain would I know the people and the streets,

10

20



Their simple usual ways, and workday deeds,  
And lives which those men live who are not kings.  
Give me good leave, dear Lord ! to pass unknown  
Beyond my happy gardens; I shall come  
The more contented to their peace again,  
Or wiser father, if not well content.  
Therefore I pray thee, let me go at will  
To-morrow, with my servants through the streets."  
And the King said, amidst his Ministers,  
"Belike this second flight may mend the first.  
Note how the falcon starts at every sight  
New from his hood, but what a quiet eye  
Cometh of freedom; let my son see all,  
And bid them bring me tidings of his mind."

30

Thus on the morrow, when the noon was come,  
The Prince and Channa passed beyond the gates,  
Which opened to the signet of the King ;  
Yet knew not they who rolled the great doors back  
It was the King's son in that merchant's robe,  
And in the clerkly-dress his charioteer.  
Forth fared they by the common way afoot,  
Mingling with all the Sakya citizens  
Seeing the glad and sad things of the town :  
The painted streets alive with hum of noon,  
The traders cross-legged, mid their spice and grain,  
The buyers with their money in the cloth,  
The war of words to cheapen this or that,  
The shout to clear the road, the huge stone wheels,  
The storn slow oxen and their rustling loads,  
The singing bearers with the palanquins,  
The broad-necked hamals sweating in the sun,  
The housewives bearing water from the well  
With balanced chatties, and athwart their hips  
The black-eyed babes; the fly-swarmed sweetmeat shops,  
The weaver at his loom, the cotton bow  
Twanging, the millstones grinding meal, the dogs  
Prowling for orts, the skiful armourer  
With tong and hammer linking shirts of mail,  
The blacksmith with a mattock and a spear

40

50



Reddening together in his coals, the school  
Where round their Guru, in a grave half-moon,  
The Sakya children sang the mantras through,  
And learned the greater and the lesser gods;  
The dyers stretching waistcloths in the sun  
Wet from the vats—orange, and rose, and green;  
The soldiers clanking past with swords and shields,  
The camel-drivers rocking on the humps,  
The Brahman proud, the martial Kshatriya,  
The humble toiling Sudra ; here a throng  
Gathered to watch some chattering snake-tamer  
Wind round his wrist the living jewellery  
Of asp and nag, or charm the hooded death  
To angry dance with dronce of beaded gourd;  
There a long line of drums and horns, which went,  
With steeds gay painted and silk canopies,  
To bring the young bride home; and hear a wife  
Stealing with cakes and garlands to the god  
To pray her husband's safe return from trade,  
Or beg a boy next birth ; hard by the booths  
Where the swart potters beat the noisy brass  
For lamps and lotas ; thence by temple walls  
And gateways, to the river and the bridge  
Under the city walls.

60

70

80

These had they passed  
When from the roadside moaned a mournful voice,  
“Help, masters ! lift me to my feet ; oh, help !  
Or I shall die before I reach my house !”  
A stricken wretch it was, whose quivering frame,  
Caught by some deadly plague, lay in the dust  
Writhing, with fiery purple blotches specked :  
The chill sweat beaded on his brow, his mouth  
Was dragged away with twitchings of sore pain,  
The wild eyes swam with inward agony.  
Gasping, he clutched the grass to rise, and rose  
Half-way, then sank, with quaking feeble limbs  
And scream of terror, crying, “Ah the pain !  
Good people, help !” whereon Sidhartha ran,  
Lifted the woful man with tender hands.  
With sweet looks laid the sick head on his knee,

90



And, while his soft touch comforted the wretch, 100  
 Asked "Brother, what is ill with there ? what harm  
 Hath fallen ? wherefor canst thou not arise ?  
 Why is it, Channa that he ants and moans,  
 And gasps to speak and sighs so pitiful ?  
 Then speak the charioteer : Great Prince ! this man  
 Is smitten with some pest; his elements  
 Are all confounded : in his veins the blood,  
 Which ran a wholesome river leaps and boils  
 A fiery flood; his heart, which kept good time,  
 Beats like an ill-played drum-skin, quick and slow ; 110  
 His sinews slacken like a bowstring slipped ;  
 The strength is gone from ham, and loin, and neck,  
 And all the grace and joy of manhood fled :  
 This is a sick man with the fit upon him.  
 See how he plucks to ease his grief,  
 And rolls his bloodshot orbs, and grinds his teeth,  
 And draws his breath as if't were choking smoke !  
 Lo ! now he would be dead; but shall not die  
 Until the plague hath had its work in him,  
 Killing the nerves which die before the life : 120  
 Then, when his strings have cracked with agony  
 And all his bones are empty of the sense  
 The ache, the plague will quit and light elsewhere.  
 Oh, sir ! it is not good to hold him so !  
 The harm may pass, and strike thee even, thee."  
 But spake the Prince, still comforting the man,  
 "And are there others, are there many thus ?"  
 Or might it be to me as now with him ?"  
 "Great Lord !" answered the charioteer, "this comes  
 In many forms to all men; griefs and wounds, 130  
 Sickness and tetter, palsies, leprosies,  
 Hot fevers, watery wastings, issues, blains  
 Befall all flesh and enter everywhere"  
 "Come such ills unobserved ?" the Prince inquired.  
 And Channa said, "Like the sly snake they come  
 That stings unseen; like the striped murderer,  
 Who waits to spring from the Karunda bush,  
 Hiding beside the jungle path; or like  
 The lightning, striking, these and sparing those,  
 As chance may send." 140



“Then all men live in fear ?”  
“So live they, prince !”

“And none can say, ‘I sleep  
Happy and whole to night, and so shall wake ?’”  
“None say it”

“And the end of many aches,  
Which come unseen and will come when they come,  
Is this, a broken body and sad mind,  
And so old age ?”

“Yea if men last as long.”  
“But if they cannot bear their agonies,  
Or if they will not bear, and seek a term ;  
Or if they bear, and be, as this man is,  
Too weak except for groans, and so still live. 150  
And growing old, grow older, then—what end ?”  
“They die, Prince”

“Die ?”  
Yea, at the last comes Death.  
In whatsoever way, whatever hour.  
Some few grow old, most suffer and fall sick,  
But all must die—behold, where comes the Dead !”

Then did Siddartha raise his eyes, and see  
Fast pacing towards the river-brink a band  
Of wailing people ; foremost one who swung  
An earthen bowl with lighted coals ; behind  
The kinsmen, shorn, with mourning marks, ungirt, 160  
Crying aloud, “O Rama Rama, hear !  
Call upon Rama, brothers ;” next the bier,  
Knit of four poles with bamboos interlaced,  
Whereon lay stark and stiff feet foremost, lean,  
Chapfallen, sightless, hollow flanked, a—grin,  
Sprinkled with red and yellow dust—the Dead  
Whom at the four went ways they turned head first,  
And crying “Rama, Rama !” carried on  
To where a pile was reared beside the stream :  
Thereon they laid him, building, fuel up 170  
Good sleep hath one that slumbers on the bed !  
He shall not wake for cold, albeit he lies



Naked to all the airs—for soon they set  
The red flame to the corners four, which crept,  
And licked, and flickered, finding out his flesh  
And feeding on it with swift hissing tongues,  
And crackle of parched skin, and snap of joint  
Till the fat smoke thinned and the ashes sank  
Scarlet and grey, with here and there a bone

White midst the grey—the total of the man. 180  
Then spoke the Prince: "Is this the end which comes  
To all who live?"

"This is the end that comes  
To all," quoth Channa: "he upon the pyre—  
Whose remnants are so petty that the crows  
Caw hungrily, then quit the fruitless feat—  
Ate, drank laughed, loved, and lived, and liked life well.  
Then came who knows?—some gust of jungle wind,  
A stumble on the path, a taint in the tank,  
A snake's nip, half a span of angry steel,  
A chill, a fishbone, or a falling tile, 190  
No appetites, no pleasure and no pains  
Hath such; the kiss upon his nought.  
The fire-scorch nought; he smelleth not his flesh  
A roast, nor yet the sandal and the spice  
They burn; the taste is emptied from his mouth,  
The hearing of his ears is clogged, the sight  
Is blinded in his eyes; those whom he loved  
Wail desolate, for even that must go,  
The body which was lamp unto the life, 200  
Or worms will have a horrid feast of it  
Here is the common destiny of flesh:  
The high and low, the good and bad, bad, must die,  
And then, 'tis taught, being anew and live  
Somewhere, somehow—who knows?—and so again  
The pangs the parting, and the lighted pile:—  
Such is man's round."

But lo! Siddhartha turned  
Eyes gleaming with divine tears to the sky,



Eyes lit with heavenly pity to the earth ;  
 Form sky to earth he looked, from earth to sky, 21  
 As if his spirit sought in lonely flight  
 Some far off vision, linking this and that.,  
 Lost—past—but searchable, but seen, but known.  
 Then cried he, while his lifed countenance  
 Glowed with the burning passion of a love  
 Unspeakable, the ardour of a hope  
 Boundless, insatiate ; ‘Oh ! suffering world ;  
 Oh ! know and unknown of my common flesh,  
 Caught in this common net of death and woe,  
 And life which binds to both ! I see, I feel 220  
 The vastness of the agony of the earth,  
 The vainness of its joys, the mockery  
 Of all its best, the anguish of its worst ;  
 Since pleasure ends in pain, and youth in age,  
 And love in loss, and life in hateful death,  
 And death in unknown lives, which will but yoke  
 Men to their wheel again to whirl the round  
 Of false delights and woes that are not false.  
 Me too this lure hath cheated, so it seemed  
 Lovely to live, and life a sunlight stream 230  
 For ever flowing in a changeless peace ;  
 Whereas the foolish ripple of the flood  
 Dances so lightly down by bloom and lawn  
 Only to pour its crystal quicklier  
 Into the fount salt sea. The veil is rent  
 Which blinded me ! I am as all these men  
 Who cry upon their gods and are not heard,  
 Or are not heeded—yet there must be aid !  
 For them and me and all there must be help !  
 Perchance the gods have need of help themselves, 240  
 Being so feeble that when sad lips cry  
 They cannot save ! I would not let one cry  
 Whom I could save ! How can it be that Brahm  
 Would make a world and keep it miserable,  
 Since, if all powerful, he leaves it so,  
 He is not good, if not powerful,  
 He is not God ? Channa ! lead home again !  
 It is enough ! mine eyes have seen enough !”



Which when the King heard, at the gates he set  
A triple guard ; and bade no man should pass  
By day or night, issuing or entering in,  
Until the days were numbered of that dream.

240

*Edwin Arnold*

## XXV UPHILL

Does the road wind uphill all the way ?

Yes, to the very end.

Will the day's journey take the whole long day ?

4

From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting place ?

A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.

May not the darkness hide it from my face ?

You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night ?

Those who have gone before.

Then must I knock, or call when just in sight ?

They will not keep you standing at that door.

12

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak ?

Of labour you shall find the sum.

Will there be beds for me and all who seek ?

Yea, beds for all who come.

16

*C. G. Rossetti*



## GOBLIN MARKET

Morning and evening  
 Maids heard the goblins cry  
 "Come buy our orchard fruits,  
 Come buy: come buy :  
 Apples and quinces,  
 Lemons and oranges,  
 Plump unpecked cherries,  
 Melons and raspberries,  
 Bloom-down-cheeked peaches,  
 Swart headed mulberries,  
 Wild free-born cranberries,  
 Crab-apples, dewberries,  
 Pineapples, blackberries,  
 Apricots, strawberries—  
 All ripe together  
 In summer weather—  
 Morns that pass by,  
 Fair eves that fly ;  
 Come buy, come buy :  
 Our grapes fresh from the vine,  
 Pomegranates full and fine,  
 Dates and sharp bullaces  
 Rare pears and greengages,  
 Damsons and bilberries,  
 Taste them and try ;  
 Currants and gooseberries,  
 Bright fire-like barberries,  
 Figs to fill your mouth,  
 Citrons from the South,  
 Sweet to tongue and sound to eye ;  
 Come buy, come buy."

Evening by evening  
 Among the brook-side rushes,  
 Laura bowed her head to hear,  
 Lizzie veiled her blushes ;  
 Crouching close together  
 In the cooling weather,



With clasping arms and cautioning lips,  
With tingling cheeks and finger tips.

40

"Lie close," Laura said,  
Pricking up her golden head.

"We must not look at goblin men,  
We must not buy their fruits ;  
Who knows upon what soil they fed  
Their hungry thirsty roots ?"

45

"Come buy," call the goblins,  
Hobbling down the glen.

"Oh," cried Lizzie, "Laura Laura,  
You should not peep at goblin men."

50

Lizzie covered up her eyes,  
Covered close lest they should look ;  
Laura reared her glossy head,  
And whispered like the restless brook :

"Look, Lizzie, look, Lizzie,

55

Down the glen tramp little men.

One hauls a basket,

One bears a plate,

One lugs a golden dish

Of many pounds' weight.

How fair the vine must grow

60

Whose grapes are so luscious !

How warm the wind must blow

Through those fruit bushes !"

"No," said Lizzie, "No, no, no ;

65

Their offers should not charm us,

Their evil gifts would harm us."

She thrust a dimpled finger

In each ear, shut eyes and ran.

Curious Laura chose to linger.

Wondering at each merchant man.

One had a cat's face,

One whisked a tail,

One tramped at a rat's pace,

One crawled like a snail,

One like a wombat prowled obtuse and furry,

One like a ratel tumbled hurry skurry.

She heard a voice like voice of doves

Cooing all together ;



To take were to purloin.  
 I have no copper in my purse,  
 I have no silver either,  
 And all my gold is on the furze 120  
 That shakes in windy weather  
 Above the rusty heather."  
 "You have much gold upon your head,"  
 They answered all together :  
 "Buy from us with a golden curl." 125  
 She clipped a precious golden lock,  
 She dropped a tear more rare than pearl.  
 Then sucked their fruit globes fair or red.  
 Sweeter than honey from the rock, 130  
 Stronger than man-rejoicing wine,  
 Clearer than water flowed that juice ;  
 She never tasted such before,  
 How should it cloy with length of use ?  
 She sucked and sucked and sucked the more  
 Fruits which that unknown orchard bore ; 135  
 She sucked until her lips were sore ;  
 Then flung the emptied rinds away,  
 But gathered up on kernel stone,  
 And knew not was it night or day 140  
 As she turned home alone.  
 Lizzie met her at the gate,  
 Full of wise upbraidings :  
 "Dear, you should not stay so late,  
 Twilight is not good for maidens :  
 Should not loiter in the glen  
 In the haunts of goblin men, 145  
 Do you not remember Jeaine.  
 How she met them in the moonlight,  
 Took their gifts both choice and many.  
 Ate their fruits, and wore their flowers 150  
 Plucked from bowers  
 Where summer ripens at all hours ?  
 But ever in the moonlight  
 She pined and pined away :  
 Sought them by night and day, 155  
 Found them no more, but dwindled and grew gray ;



They sounded kind and full of loves  
In the pleasant weather.

Laura stretched her gleaming neck  
Like a rush imbedded swan,  
Like a lily from the beck,  
Like a moonlit poplar branch,  
Like a vessel at the launch  
When its last restraint is gone.

Backward up the mossy glen  
Turned and trooped the goblin men,  
With their shrill repeated cry,  
"Come buy, come buy."  
When they reached where Laura was,  
They stood stock still upon the moss,  
Leering at each other,  
Brother with queer brother ;  
Signalling each other,  
Brother with sly brother  
One set his basket down,  
One reared his plate ;  
One began to weave a crown  
Of tendrils, leaves and rough nuts brown.  
(Men sell not such in any town) ;  
One heaved the golden weight  
Of dish and fruit to offer her ;  
"Come buy, come buy" was still their cry.  
Laura stared but did not stir  
Longed but had no money.  
The whisk-tailed merchant bade her taste  
In tones as smooth as honey.  
The cat faced purred,  
The rat paced spoke a word  
Of welcome, and the snail paced even was heard ;  
One parrot voiced and jolly  
Cried, "Pretty Goblin" still for "Pretty Polly";  
One whistled like a bird.  
But sweet-tooth Laura spoke in haste :  
"Good folk, I have no coin ;



Then fell with the first snow,  
While to this day no grass will grow  
Where she lies low ;  
I planted daisies there a year ago  
That never blow.  
You should not loiter so.”  
“Nay ; hush,” said Laura ;  
“Nay, hush, my sister.  
I ate and ate my fill,  
Yet my mouth waters still.  
Tomorrow night I will  
Buy more” ; and kissed her.  
“Have done with sorrow ;  
I’ll bring you plums tomorrow  
Fresh on their mother twigs,  
Cherries worth getting ;  
You cannot think what figs  
My teeth have met in,  
What melons icy-cold  
Piled on a dish of gold  
Too huge for me to hold,  
What peaches with a velvet nap,  
Pellucid grapes without one seed.  
Odorous indeed must be the mead  
Whereon they grow, and pure the wave they drink  
With lilies at the brink,  
And sugar-sweet their sap.”

Golden head by golden head,  
Like two pigeons in one nest  
Folded in each other’s wings,  
They lay down in their curtained bed ;  
Like two blossoms on one stem,  
Like two flakes of new-fallen snow,  
Like two wands of ivory  
Tipped with gold for awful kings  
Moon and stars gazed in at them,  
Wind sang to them lullaby,  
Lumbering owls forebore to fly,  
Not a bat flapped to and fro  
Round their nest ;



Cheek to cheek and breast to breast  
Locked together in one nest.

Early in the morning  
When the first cock crowed his warning, 200  
Neat like bees as sweet and busy,  
Laura rose with Lizzie ;  
Fetched in honey, milked the cows ;  
Aired and set to rights the house,  
Kneaded cakes of whitest wheat, 205  
Cakes for dainty mouths to eat,  
Next churned butter, whipped up cream,  
Fed their poultry, sat and sewed ;  
Talked as modest maidens should—  
Lizzie with an open heart,  
Laura in an absent dream, 210  
One content, one sick in part ;  
One warbling for the mere bright day's delight,  
One longing for the night.

At length slow evening came.  
They went with pitchers to the reedy brook : 215  
Lizzie most placid in her look,  
Laura most like a leaping flame.  
They drew the gurgling water from its deep.  
Lizzie plucked purple and rich golden flags, 220  
Then turning homeward said : "The sunset flushes  
Those furthest loftiest crags ;  
Came Laura, not another maiden lags,  
No wiful squirrel wags ;  
The beasts and birds are fast asleep." 225

But Laura loitered still among the rushes,  
And said the bank was steep,  
And said the hour was early still,  
The dew not fallen, the wind not chill ;  
Listening ever, but not catching 230  
The customary cry,  
"Come buy, come buy,"  
With its iterated jingle  
Of sugar-baited words ;



Not for all her watching  
Once discerning even one goblin  
Racing, whisking, tumbling, hobbling—  
Let alone the herds  
That used to tramp along the glen,  
In groups or single,  
Of brisk fruit-mechant men,

Till Lizzie urged, 'O Laura, come ;  
I hear the fruit-call but I dare not look.  
You should not loiter longer at this brook ;  
Come with me home.  
The stars rise, the moon bends her arc,  
Each glowworm winks her spark.  
Let us get home before the night grows dark,  
For clouds may gather  
Though this is summer weather,  
Put out the lights and drench us through ;  
Then if we lost our way what should we do ?'

Laura turned cold as stone  
To find her sister heard that cry alone,  
That goblin cry,  
"Come buy our fruits, come buy"  
Must she then buy no more such dainty fruit ?  
Must she no more such succous pasture find,  
Gone deaf and blind ?  
Her tree of life drooped from the root ;  
She said not one word in her heart's sore ache ;  
But peering through the dimness, naught discerning,  
Trudged home, her pitcher dripping all the way ;  
So crept to bed, and lay  
Silent till Lizzie slept ;  
Then sat up in a passionate yearning,  
And gnashed her teeth for balked desire, and wept  
As if her heart would break.

Day after day, night after night,  
Laura kept watch in vain  
In sullen silence of exceeding pain.  
She never caught again the goblin cry,



"Come buy, come buy";  
 She never spied the goblin men 275  
 Hawking their fruits along the glen.  
 But when the noon waxed bright  
 Her hair grew thin and gray;  
 She dwindled, as the fair full moon doth turn  
 To swift decay and burn  
 Her fire away. 280

One day, remembering her kernel-stone,  
 She set it by a wall that faced the south;  
 Dewed it with tears, hoped for a root,  
 Watched for a waxing shoot.  
 But there came none. 285  
 It never sow the sun,  
 It never felt the trickling moisture run;  
 While with sunk eyes and faded mouth  
 She dreamed of melons, as a traveller sees  
 False waves in desert drouth 290  
 With shade of leaf-crowned trees'

And burns the thirstier in the sandful breeze.  
 She no more swept the house,  
 Tended the fowls or cows,  
 Fetched honey, kneaded cakes of wheat, 295  
 Brought water from the brook.  
 But sat down listless in the chimney-nook  
 And would not eat.

Tender Lizzie could not bear  
 To watch her sister's cankerous care, 300  
 Yet not to share.  
 She night and morning  
 Caught the goblins' cry:  
 "Come buy our orchard fruits,  
 Come buy, come buy." 305  
 Beside the brook, along the glen,  
 She heard the tramp of goblin men,  
 The voice and stir  
 Poor Laura could not hear;  
 Longed to buy fruit to comfort her, 310



But feared to pay too dear.  
She thought of Jeanie in her grave,  
Who should have been a bride ;  
But who for joys brides hope to have  
Fell sick and died  
In her gay prime,  
In ealiest winter time,  
With the first glazing rime,  
With the first snow-fall of crisp winter time. 315

Till Laura dwindling  
Seemed knocking at Death's door. 320  
Then Lizzie weighed no more  
Better and worse ;  
But put a silver penny in her purse,  
Kissed Laura, crossed the heath with clumps of furze 325  
At twilight, halted by the brook,  
And for the first time in her life  
Began to listen and to look.

Laughed every goblin  
When they spied her peeping ;  
Come toward her hobbling, 330  
Flying, running, leaping,  
Puffing and blowing,  
Chuckling, clapping, crowing,  
Clucking and gobbling 335  
Mopping and mowing.  
Full of airs and graces ;  
Pulling wry faces,  
Demure grimaces.  
Cat-like and rat-like, 340  
Ratel-and wombat-like,  
Snail-paced in a hurry,  
Parrot-voiced and whistler,  
Helter-skelter, hurry-skurry,  
Chattering like magpies, 345  
Fluttering like pigeons,  
Gliding like fishes—  
Hugged her and kissed her,  
Squeezed and caressed her,



Stretched up their dishes, 350  
 Panniers and plates :  
 "Look at our apples  
 Russet and dun,  
 Bob at our cherries,  
 Bite at our peaches, 355  
 Citrons and dates,  
 Grapes for the asking,  
 Pears red with basking  
 Our in the sun,  
 Plums on their twigs, 360  
 Pluck them and suck them—  
 Pomegranates, figs."  
 "Good folk," said Lizzie,  
 Mindful of Jeanie.  
 "Give me much and many" : 365  
 Held out her apron,  
 Tossed them her penny.  
 "Nay, take a seat with us,  
 Honor and eat with us," 370  
 They answered grinning ;  
 "Our feast is but beginning.  
 Night yet is early,  
 Warm and dew pearly,  
 Wakeful and starry.  
 Such fruits as these 375  
 No man can carry ;  
 Half their bloom would fly,  
 Half their dew would dry,  
 Half their flavour would pass by.  
 Sit down and feast with us, 380  
 Be welcome guest with us,  
 Cheer you and rest with us."—  
 "Thank you", said Lizzie, "but one waits  
 At home alone for me ;  
 So without further parleying 385  
 If you will not sell me any  
 Of your fruits though much and many,  
 Give me back my silver penny  
 I tossed you for a fee."



They began to scratch their pates, 390  
 No longer wagging, purring,  
 But visibly demurring,  
 Grunting and snarling.  
 One called her proud,  
 Cross-grained, uncivil, 395  
 Their tones waxed loud,  
 Their looks were evil.  
 Lashing their tails.  
 They trod and hustled her, 400  
 Elbowed and jostled her,  
 Clawed with their nails.  
 Barking, mewling, hissing, mocking.  
 Tore her gown and soiled her stocking,  
 Twitched her hair out by the roots,  
 Stamped upon her tender feet, 405  
 Held her hands and squeezed their fruits  
 Against her mouth to make her eat.  
 White and golden Lizzie stood,  
 Like a lily in a flood—  
 Like a rock of blue-veined stone 410  
 Lashed by tides obstreperously—  
 Like a beacon left alone  
 In a hoary, roaring sea,  
 Sending up a golden fire—  
 Like a fruit-crowned orange-tree 415  
 White with blossoms honey-sweet  
 Sore beset by wasp and bee—  
 Like a royal virgin town  
 Topped with gilded dome and spire  
 Close beleaguered by a fleet 420  
 Mad to tug her standard down.

One may lead a horse to water ;  
 Twenty cannot make him drink.  
 Though the goblins cuffed and caught her, 425  
 Coaxed and fought her,  
 Bullied and besought her,  
 Scratched her ; pinched her black as ink,  
 Kicked and knocked her,



Mauled and mocked her, 430  
 Lizzie uttered not a word ;  
 Would not open lip from lip  
 Lest they should cram a mouthful in ;  
 But laughed in heart to feel the drip  
 Of juice that siruped all her face,  
 And lodged in dimples of her chin,  
 And streaked her neck which quaked like curd. 435  
 At last the evil people,  
 Worn out by her resistance,  
 Flung back her penny, kicked their fruit  
 Along whichever road they took, 440  
 Not leaving root or stone or shoot ;  
 Some writhed into the ground,  
 Some dived into the brook  
 With ring and ripple,  
 Some scudded on the gale without a sound, 445  
 Some vanished in the distance.  
 In a smart, ache, tingle,  
 Lizzie went her way ;  
 Knew not was it night or day ;  
 Sprang up the bank, tore through the furze, 450  
 Threaded copse and dingle,  
 And heard her penny jingle  
 Bouncing in her purse—  
 Its bounce was music to her ear,  
 She ran and ran  
 As if she feared some goblin man  
 Dogged her with gibe or curse  
 Or something worse ;  
 But not one goblin scurried after,  
 Nor was she pricked by fear ; 460  
 The kind heart made her windy-paced  
 That urged her home quite out of breath with haste  
 And inward laughter.  
 She cried, "Laura" up the garden,  
 "Did you miss me ?  
 Come and kiss me.  
 Never mind my bruises,  
 Hug me, kiss me, suck my juices



Squeezed from goblin fruits for you,  
Goblin pulp and goblin dew. 470  
Eat me, drink me, love me;  
Laura, make much of me ;  
For your sake I have braved the glen  
And had to do with goblin merchant men."

Laura started from her chair,  
Flung her arms up in the air, 475  
Clutched her hair :

"Lizzie, Lizzie, have you tasted  
For my sake the fruit forbidden ?  
Must your light like mine be hidden, 480  
Your young life like mine be wasted,  
Undone in mine undoing,  
And ruined in my ruin.

Thirsty, cankered goblin-ridden ?"—  
She clung about her sister,  
Kissed and kissed and kissed her ; 485  
Tears once again

Refreshed her shrunken eyes,  
Dropping like rain  
After long sultry drouth ; 490  
Shaking with anguish fear, and pain,  
She kissed and kissed her with a hungry mouth.  
Her lips began to scorch,

That juice was wormwood to her tongue,  
She loathed the feast 495  
Writhing as one possessed, she leaped and sung,  
Rent all her robe, and wrung  
Her hands in lamentable haste,  
And beat her breast.

Her locks streamed like the torch 500  
Borne by a racer at full speed,  
Or like the mane of horses in their flight,  
Or like an eagle when she stems the light  
Straight toward the sun,  
Or like a caged thing freed, 505  
Or Like a flying flag when armies run.

Swift fire spread through her veins, knocked at her heart,



Met the fire smoldering there  
And ovesbore its lesser flame ;  
She gorged on bitterness without a name— 510

Ah, fool, to choose such part  
Of soul-consuming care !  
Sense failed in the mortal strife ;  
Like the watch tower of a town  
Which an earthquake shatters down, 515  
Like a lightning-stricken mast,  
Like a wind-uprooted tree  
Spun about,

Like a foam-topped waterspout  
Cast down headlong in the sea, 520  
She fell at last :  
Pleasure past and anguish past,  
Is it death or is it life ?

Life out of death.  
That night long Lizzie watched by her, 525  
Counted her pulse's flagging stir,

Felt for her breath,  
Held water to her lips, and cooled her face  
With tears and fanning leaves.

But when the first birds chirped about their eaves, 530  
And early reapers plodded to the place  
Of golden sheaves,

And dew-wet grass  
Bowed in the morning winds so brisk to pass,  
And new buds with new day 535

Opened of cup-like lilies on the stream,  
Laura awoke as from a dream,

Laughed in the innocent old way,  
Hugged Lizzie but not twice or thrice ;

Her gleaming locks showed not one thread of gray, 540  
Her breath was sweet as May.

And light danced in her eyes.  
Days, weeks, months, years

Afterwards, when both were wives  
With children of their own ; 545

Their mother-hearts beset with fears,



550  
555  
563  
565

Their lives bound up in tender lives ;  
Laura would call the little ones  
And tell them of her early prime,  
Those pleasant days long gone  
Of not-returning time ;  
Would talk about the haunted glen,  
The wicked quaint fruit-merchant men,  
Their fruits like honey to the throat  
But poison in the blood  
(Men sell not such in any town) ;  
Would tell them how her sister stood  
In deadly peril to do her good,  
And win the fiery antidote ;  
Then joining hands to little hands  
Would bid them cling together—  
“For there is no friend like a sister  
In calm or stormy weather ;  
To cheer one on the tedious way,  
To fetch one if one goes astray,  
To fetch one if one totters down,  
To strengthen whilst one stands.”

*Christina Rossetti*

## XXVII

### RUGBY CHAPEL

Coldly, sadly descends  
The autumn evening ! The field  
Strewn with its dank yellow drifts  
Of withered leaves, and the elms,  
Fade into dimness apace,  
Silent ;—hardly a shout  
From a few boys late at their play !  
The lights come out in the street,  
In the school room window ;—but cold,  
Solemn, unlighted, austere,  
Through the gathering darkness, arise  
The chapel-walls, in whose bound  
Thou, my father ! art laid.



There thou dost lie, in the gloom  
Of the autumn evening. But ah !  
That word *gloom*, to my mind  
Brings thee back, in the light  
Of thy radiant vigour again !  
In the gloom of November we pass'd  
Days not dark at thy side ;

20

Seasons impair'd not the ray  
Of thine even cheerfulness clear.  
Such thou wast ! and I stand  
In the autumn evening, and think  
Of bygone autumns with thee.  
Fifteen years have gone round  
Since thou arosest to tread  
In the summer-morning, the road  
Of death at a call unforeseen,

30

Sudden ! For fifteen years,  
We who till then in thy shade  
Rested as under the boughs  
Of a mighty oak, have endured  
Sunshine and rain as we might,  
Bare, unshaded, alone  
Lacking the shelter of thee !  
O strong soul, by what shore  
Tarriest thou now ? For the force,  
Surely, has not been left vain !

40

Somewhere, surely, afar,  
In the sounding labour-house vast  
Of being, is practised that strength,  
Zealous, beneficent, firm !  
Yes, in some far-shining sphere,  
Conscious or not of the past,  
Still thou performest the word  
Of the Spirit in whom thou dost live—  
Prompt, unwearied as here !  
Still thou upraisest with zeal !  
The humble good from the ground,  
Sternly represses the bad !  
Still, like a trumpet, dost rouse  
Those who with half-open eyes  
Tread the border-land dim

50



'Twixt vice and virtue ; reviv'st.  
Succourest !—this was thy work,  
This was thy life upon earth.

What is the course of the life  
Of mortal men on the earth ?—  
Most men eddy about  
Here and there eat and drink,  
Chatter and love and hate,  
Gather and squander, are raised  
Aloft, and hurl'd in the dust,  
Striving blindly, achieving  
Nothing ; and then they die—  
Perish ! and no one asks  
Who or what they have been,  
More than he asks what waves,  
In the moonlit solitudes mild  
Of the midmost Ocean have swell'd  
Foam'd for a moment, and gone.

And there are some whom a thirst  
Ardent unquenchable fires  
Not with the crowd to be spent ?  
Not without aim to go round  
In an eddy of purposeless dust,  
Effort unmeaning and vain.  
Ah yes ! some of us strive,  
Not without action to die  
Fruitless, but something to snatch  
From dull oblivion nor all  
Glut the devouring grave !  
We, we have chosen our path—  
Path to a clear-purposed goal,  
Path of advance ! but it leads  
A long, steep journey through sunken  
Gorges o'er mountains in snow !  
Cheerful, with friends, we set forth—  
Then on the height, comes the storm !  
Thunder crashes from rock  
To rock, the cataracts reply ;  
Lightnings dazzle our eyes ;  
Roaring torrents have breach'd



The track—the stream-bed descends  
In the place where the wayfarer once  
Planted his footsteps—the spray  
Boils o'er its border ! aloft,  
The unseen snow-beds dislodge  
Their hanging ruin : alas.

100

Havoc is made in our train !  
Friends, who set forth at our side,  
Falter, are lost in the storm !  
We, we only are left !

With foreheads, with lips  
Sternly compressed we strain on,  
On—and at nightfall at last  
Come to the end of our way,  
To the lonely inn mid the rocks ;

110

Where the gaunt and taciturn host  
Stand on the threshold, the wind  
Snaking his thin white hairs—  
Holds his lantern to scan

Our storm beat figures and asks :  
Whom in our party we bring ?  
Whom we have left in the snow ?

Sadly we answer : We bring  
Only ourselves ! we lost  
Sight of the rest in the storm  
Hardly ourselves we fought through  
Stripp'd, without friends, as we are !  
Friends companions, and train  
The avalanche swept from our side.

120

But thou would'st not *alone*  
Be saved my father ! *alone*  
Conquer and come to thy goal  
Leaving the rest in the wild.  
We were weary and we  
Fearful and we in our march  
Fain to drop down and to die  
Still thou turnedst, and still  
Beckonedst the trembler, and still  
Gavest the weary thy hand !

130



If, in the paths of the world,  
 Stones might have wounded thy feet,  
 Toil or dejection have tried  
 Thy spirit, of that we saw  
 Nothing ! to us thou wast still  
 Cheerful, and helpful, and firm.  
 Therefore to thee it was given  
 Many to save with thyself ;  
 And, at the end of thy day,  
 O faithful shepherd ! to come,  
 Bringing thy sheep in thy hand.  
 And through the I believe  
 In the noble and great who are gone ;  
 Pure souls honour'd and blest  
 By former ages, who else—  
 Such, so soulless, so poor,  
 Is the race men whom I see—  
 Seemed but a dream of the heart,  
 Seemed but a cry of desire.  
 Yes ! I believe that there lived  
 Others like thee in the past.  
 Not like the men of the crowd  
 Who all round me to-day  
 Bluster or cringe, and make life  
 Hidour, and arid, and vile ;  
 But souls temper'd with fire,  
 Fervent, heroic, and good  
 Helpers and friends of mankind.  
 Servants of God !—or sons  
 Shall I not call you ? because  
 Not as servants ye knew  
 Your Father's innermost mind,  
 His, who unwillingly sees  
 One of his little ones lost—  
 Yours is the praise, if mankind  
 Hath not as yet in its march  
 Fainted, and fallen and died !  
 See ! In the rocks of the world  
 Marches the host of mankind,  
 A feeble, wavering line !

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Where are they tending ? A God  
Marshall'd them—gave their goal,  
Ah, but the way is so long !  
Years they have been in the wild !  
Sore thirst plagues them, the rocks,  
Rising all round, overawe  
Factions divide them their host  
Threatens to break, to dissolve—  
—Ah keep them combined !  
Else, of the myriads who fill  
That army, not one shall arrive ;  
Sole they shall stray ; in the rocks  
Labour for ever in vain,  
Die one by one in the waste.

180

Then in such hour of need  
Of your fainting, dispirited race,  
Ye, like angels appear,  
Radiant with ardour divine !  
Beacons of hope, ye appear !  
Langour is not in your heart,  
Weakness not on your word,  
Weariness not on your brow.  
Ye alight in our van ! at voice,  
Panic, despair flee away.  
Ye move through the ranks, recall  
The stragglers, refresh the outworn,  
Praise, re inspire the brave !  
Order, courage, return.  
Eyes rekindling, and prayers,  
Follow your steps as ye go.  
Ye fill up the gaps in our files,  
Strengthen the wavering lane,  
Stablish, continue our march.  
On, to the bound of the waste,  
On, to the city of God !

190

200

*Matthew Arnold*



## XXVIII

### SAY NOT THE STRUGGLE NAUGHT AVAILETH

Say not the struggle naught availeth,  
The labour and the wounds are vain,  
The enemy faints not, nor faileth,  
And as things have been they remain.

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars ;  
It may be, in yon smoke conceal'd,  
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers.  
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,  
Seemed here no painful inch to gain,  
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,  
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,  
When daylight comes, comes in the light,  
In front the sun climbs slow, how slowly,  
But westward, look, the land is bright.

*Arthur Hugh Clough*

## XXIX

### OUR CASUARINA TREE

Like a huge Python, winding round and round  
The rugged trunk, indented deep with scars  
Up to its very summit near the star,  
A creeper climbs, in whose embraces bound  
No other tree could live. But gallantly  
The giant wears the scarf, and flowers are hung  
In crimson clusters all the boughs among,  
Whereon all day are gathered bird and bee ;  
And oft at nights the garden overflows



With one sweet song that seems to have no close, 10  
 Song darklin from our tree, while men repose.

When first my casement is wide open thrown  
 At dawn, my eyes delighted on it rest ;  
 Sometimes and most in winter,—on its crest  
 A gray baboon sits statue like alone 15  
 Watching the sunrise ; while lower boughs  
 His puny off-spring leap about and play ;  
 And far and near kokilas hail the day ;  
 And to their pastures wend our sleepy cows ;  
 And in the shadow, on the broad tank cast 20  
 By that hoar tree, so beautiful and vast,  
 The water lilies spring, like snow enmassed.

But not because of its magnificence  
 Dear is the Casuarina to my soul :  
 Beneath it we have played ; though years may roll, 25  
 O sweet companions, loved with love intense,  
 For your sakes shall the tree be ever dear !  
 Blent with your images, it shall arise  
 In memory, till the hot tears blind mine eyes !  
 What is that dirge like murmur that I hear 30  
 Like the sea breaking on a shingle beach ?  
 It is the tree's lament, an eerie speech,  
 That haply to the unknown land may reach.

Unknown, yet well known to the eye of faith !  
 Ah, I have heard that wail far, far away 35  
 In distant lands, by many a sheltered bay,  
 When slumbered in his cave the water-wraith  
 And the waves gently kissed the classic shore  
 Of France or Italy, beneath the moon,  
 When earth lay tranced in a dreamless swoon : 40  
 And every time the music rose, before  
 Mine inner vision rose a form sublime,  
 Thy form, O Tree, as in my happy prime  
 I saw thee, in my own loved native clime.

Therefore I fain would consecrate a lay  
 Unto thy honour, Tree, beloved of those 45



Who now in blessed sleep for a ye repose,  
 Dearer than life to me, alas ! were they !  
 Mayst thou be numbered when my days are done  
 With deathless trees—like those in Borrowdale,  
 Under whose awful branches lingered pale  
 “Fear, trembling Hope, and Death, the skeleton,  
 And Time the shadow ;” and though weak the verse  
 That would thy beauty fain, oh fain rehearse.  
 May Love defend thee from Oblivion’s curse

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Toru Dul

### XXX

#### KING ROBERT OF SICILY

Robert of Sicily, brother of Pope Urbane  
 And Valmond, Emperor of Allemaine,  
 Apparelled in magnificent attire.  
 With retinue of many a knight and squire,  
 On St. John’s eve, at vespers, proudly sat  
 And heard the priests chant the Magnificat.  
 And as he listened, o’er and or refrain,  
 Repeated, like a burden or refrain,  
 He caught the words, ‘*Deposuit potentes*  
*De sede, et exaltavit humiles*’ ;  
 And slowly lifting up his kingly head  
 He to a learned clerk beside him said,  
 “What mean these words?” The clerk made answer meet,  
 ‘He has put down the mighty from their scat,  
 And has exalted them of low degree.’  
 Thereat King Robert muttered scornfully,  
 “’Tis well that such seditious words are sung  
 Only by priests and in the Latin tongue ;  
 For unto priests and people be it known,  
 There is no power can push me from my throne !”  
 And leaning back, he yawned and fell asleep,  
 Lulled by the chant monotonous and deep.  
 When he awoke, it was already night ;  
 The church was empty, and there was no light,

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Save where the lamps, that glimmered few and saint, 25  
 Lighted a little space before some faint.  
 He started from his seat and gazed around,  
 But saw no living thing and heard no sound.  
 He groped towards the door, but it was locked ;  
 He cried aloud, and listened, and then knocked, 30  
 And uttered awful threatenings and complaints,  
 And imprecations upon men and saints.  
 The sounds re-echoed from the roof and walls  
 As if dead priests were laughing in their stalls.  
 At length, the sexton, hearing from without 35  
 The tumult of the knocking and the shout,  
 And thinking thieves were in the house of prayer,  
 Came with his lantern, asking, 'Who is there ?'  
 Half choked with rage, King Robert fiercely said,  
 'Open : 'tis I, the King ! Art thou afraid ?' 40  
 The frightened sexton ; muttering with a curse,  
 'This is some drunken vagabond, or worse !'  
 Turned the great key and flung the portal wide ;  
 A man rushed by him at a single stride, 45  
 Haggard, half naked, without hat or cloak,  
 Who neither turned, nor looked at him, nor spoke,  
 But leaped into the blackness of the night,  
 And vanished like a spectre from his sight.  
 Robert of Sicily, brother of Pope Urbane  
 And Valmond, Emperor of Allemaine, 50  
 Despoiled of his magnificent attire,  
 Bareheaded, breathless and besprent with mire,  
 With sense of wrong and outrage desperate,  
 Strode on and thundered at the palace gate ;  
 Rushed through the courtyard, thrusting in his rage 55  
 To right and left each seneschal and page,  
 And hurried up the broad and sounding stair,  
 His white face ghastly in the torches' glare.  
 From hall to hall he passed with breathless speed ;  
 Voices and cries he heard, but did not heed, 60  
 Until at last he reached the banquet-room,  
 Blazing with light and breathing with perfume.  
 There on the dais sat another king,  
 Wearing his robes, his crown, his signet-ring,



King Robert's self in features, form, and height, 65  
But all transfigured with angelic light !  
It was an Angel ; and his presence there  
With a divine effulgence filled the air,  
An exaltation, piercing the disguise,  
Though none the hidden Angel recognize. 70

A moment speechless, motionless, amazed,  
The throneless monarch on the Angel gazed,  
Who met his look of anger and surprise  
With the divine compassion of his eyes :  
Then said, 'Who art thou ? and why com'st thou here?' 75  
To which King Robert answered with a sneer,  
'I am the King and come to claim my own  
From an impostor, who usurps my throne !'  
And suddenly, at these audacious words,  
Up sprang the angry guests, and drew their swords ; 80  
The Angel answered, with unruffled brow,  
'Nay, not the King, but the King's Jester, thou  
Henceforth shalt wear the bells and scalloped cape,  
And for thy counselor shalt load an ape :  
Thou shalt obey my servants when they call, 85  
And wait upon my henchmen in the hall !'  
Deaf to King Robert's threats and cries and prayers,  
They thrust him from the hall and down the stairs ;  
A group of tittering pages ran before,  
And as they opened wide the folding-door, 90  
His heart failed, for he heard, with strange alarms,  
The boisterous laughter of the men-at-arms,  
And all the vaulted chamber roar and ring  
With the mock plaudits of 'Long live the King !'  
Next morning, waking with the day's first beam, 95  
He said within himself 'It was a dream !'  
But the straw rustled as he turned his head.  
There were the cap and bell beside his bed,  
Around him rose the bare, discoloured walls,  
Close by, the steeds were champing in their stalls, 100  
And in the corner a revolting shape,  
Shivering and chattering sat the wretched ape.  
It was no dream ; the world he loved so much



Had turned to dust and ashes at his touch

Days came and went ; and now returned again 105  
To Sicily the old Saturnian reign ;  
Under the angel's governance benign  
The happy island danced with corn and wine,  
And deep within the mountain's burning breast  
Enceladus, the gaint, was at rest. 110

Meanwhile, King Robert yielded to his fate,  
Sullen and silent and disconsolate,  
Dressed in the motley garb that Jesters wear,  
With look bewildered and a vacant stare,  
Close shaven above the ears as monks are shorn, 115  
By courtiers mocked, by pages laughed to scorn,  
His only friend the ape, his only food  
What others left—he still was unsubdued.  
And when the Angel met him on his way,  
And half in earnest, half in jest, would say 120  
Sternly, though tenderly, that he might feel  
The velvet scabbard held a sword of steel,  
'Art thou the King ?' the passion of his woe  
Burst from him in resistless overflow,  
And, lifting high his forehead he would fling 125  
The haughty answer back, 'I am, I am the King !

Almost three years were ended : when there came  
Ambassadors of great repute and name  
From Valmond, Emperor of Allemaine,  
Unto King Robert saying that Pope Urbane 130  
By letter summoned them forthwith to come  
On Holy Thursday to his city of Rome.  
The Angel with great joy received his guests,  
And gave them presents of embroidered vest,  
And velvet mantles with rich ermine lined, 135  
And rings and jewels of the rarest kind,  
Then he departed with them o'er the sea  
Into the lovely land of Italy,  
Whose loveliness was more resplendent made  
By the mere passing of that cavalcade, 140  
With plumes, and cloaks, and housings, and the stir  
Of jewelled bridle and of golden spur



And lo ! among the menials, in mock state,  
 Upon a piebald steed, with shambling gait,  
 His cloak of fox-tails flapping in the wind,  
 The solemn ape demurely perched behind,  
 King Robert rode, making huge merriment  
 In all the country towns through which they went.  
 The Pope received them with great pomp and blare  
 Of bannered trumpets, on Saint Peter's square,  
 Giving his benediction and embrace,  
 Fervent, and full of apostolic grace.  
 While with congratulations and with prayers  
 He entertained the Angel unawares,  
 Robert, the Jester bursting through the crowd,  
 Into their presence rushed and cried aloud,  
 'I am the King ! Look, and behold in me  
 Robert, your brother, King of Sicily !  
 This man, who wears my semblance to your eyes,  
 Is an impostor in a king's disguise.  
 Do you not know me ? does no voice within  
 Answer my cry and say we are akin ?'  
 The Pope in silence, but, with troubled mien,  
 Gazed at the Angel's countenance serene ;  
 The Emperor, laughing, said, 'It is strange sport  
 To keep a madman for thy Fool at court !'  
 And the poor, baffled Jester in disgrace  
 Was hustled back among the populace.  
 In solemn state the Holy Week went by,  
 And Easter Sunday gleamed upon the sky :  
 The presence of the Angel, with its light,  
 Before the sun rose, made the city bright.  
 And with new fervour filled the hearts of men,  
 Who felt that Christ indeed had risen again.  
 Even the Jester, on his bed of straw,  
 With haggard eyes the unwonted splendour saw,  
 He left within a power unfelt before,  
 And, kneeling humbly on his chamber floor  
 He heard the rushing garments of the Lord  
 Sweep through the silent air, ascending heaven-ward.  
 And now the visit ending, and once more  
 Valmond returning to the Danube's shore,



Homeward the Angel journeyed, and again  
 The land was made resplendent with his train,  
 Flashing alone the towns of Italy 185  
 Unto Salerno, and from thence by sea.  
 And when once more within Palermo's wall,  
 And, seated on the throne in his great hall,  
 He heard the Angelus from convent towers,  
 As if the better world conversed with ours, 190  
 He beckned to King Robert to draw nigher,  
 And with a gesture bade the rest retire;  
 And when they were alone, the Angle said,  
 "Art thou the King?" Then bowing down his head,  
 King Robert crossed both hands upon his breast, 195  
 And meekly answered him: "Thou knowest best!  
 My sins as scarlet are; let me go hence.  
 And in some cloister's school of penitence,  
 Walk barefoot till my guilty soul be shriven!"  
 Then Angle smiled, and from his radiant face  
 A holy light illumined all the place,  
 And through the open window loud and clear,  
 They heard the monks chant in the chapel near,  
 'Above the stir and tumult of the street; 205  
 He has put down the mighty from their seat,  
 And has exalted them of degree!"  
 And through the chant a second melody  
 Rose like the throbbing of a single string!"  
 'I am an Angel, and thou art the King!' 210  
 King Robert, who was standing near the throne,  
 Lifted his eyes, and lo he was alone!  
 With ermined mantle and with cloth of gold;  
 And when his courtiers came, they found him there 215  
 Kneeling upon the floor, absorbed in silent prayer.

*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*



## XXXI

### LEAD, KINDLY LIGHT

Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,  
 Lead Thou me on !  
 The night is dark, and I am far from home—  
 Lead Thou me on !  
 Keep Thou my feet ; I do not ask to see  
 The distant scene—one step enough for me.  
  
 I was not ever thus, not prayed that Thou  
 Shouldst lead me on  
 I loved to choose and to see my path, but now  
 Lead Thou me on !  
 I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,  
 Pride ruled my will ; remember not past years.  
  
 So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still  
 Will lead me on,  
 O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till  
 The night is gone ;  
 And with the morn those angle faces smile,  
 Which I have loved long since and lost awhile.

10

*John Henry Newman*

## XXXII

### A DUTCH PICTURE

*Simon Danz* has come home again,  
 From cruising about with his buccaneers ;  
 He has singed the beard of the King of Spain ,  
 And carried away the Dean of Jaen  
 And sold him in Algiers.

In his house by the Maese, with its roof of tiles  
 And weathercocks flying aloft in air,



There are silver tankards of antique styles,  
Plunder of convent and castle, and piles  
Of carpets rich and rare. 10

In his tulip-garden there by the town,  
Overlooking the sluggish stream,  
With his Moorish cap and dressing-gown,  
The old sea-captain, hale and brown,  
Walks in walking dream,

A smile in his gray mustachio lurks  
Whenever he thinks of the King of Spain,  
And the listed tulips look like Turks,  
And the silent gardener as he works  
Is changed to the Dean of Jaen. 20

The windmills on the outermost  
Verge of the landscape in the haze,  
To him are towers on the Spanish coast,  
With whiskered sentinels at their post,  
Though this is the river Mease.

But when the winter rains begin,  
He sits and smokes by the blazing brands,  
And old seafaring men come in,  
Goat bearded, gray, and with double chin,  
And rings upon their hands. 30

They sit there in the shadow and shine  
Of the flickering fire of the winter night;  
Figures in colour and design  
Like those by Rembrandt of the Rhine,  
Half darkness and half light.

And they talk of ventures lost or won,  
And their talk is ever and ever the same.  
While they drink the red wine of Taragon,  
From the cellars of some Spanish Don,  
Or convent set on flame. 40



Restless at times, with heavy strides  
He paces his parlour to and fro ;  
He is like a ship that at anchor rides  
And swings with the rising and failing tides,  
And tugs at her anchor-tow.

Voices mysterious far and near,  
Sound of the wind and sound of the sea,  
Are calling and whispering in his ear,  
“Simon Danz ! Why stayest thou here ?  
Come forth and follow me !”

50

So he thinks he shall take to the sea again  
For one more cruise with his buccaneers,  
To singe the beard of the King of Spain,  
And capture another Dean of Jaen  
And sell him in Algiers.

*Henry Wadsworth Longfellow*

### XXXIII

#### SEA FEVER

I must go down to the seas again, to the lonely sea and  
the sky,

And all I ask is a tall ship and a star to steer her by,  
And the wheel's kick and the wind's song and the white  
sails shaking,

And a grey mist on the sea's face and a grey dawn  
breaking. 4

I must go down to the seas again, for all the call of the  
running tide

Is a wild call and a clear call that may not be denied ;  
And all I ask is a windy day with the white clouds flying,  
And the flung spray and the blown spume, and the  
sea-gulls crying. 8



I must go down to the seas again, to the vagrant gypsy life,  
To the gull's way and the whale's way where the wind's  
like a whetted knifed ;  
And all I ask is a merry yarn from a laughing fellow-  
rover,  
And quiet sleep and a sweet dream when the long  
trick's over. 12

*John Masefield*

### XXXIV

#### A BALLAD OF SIR PERTAB SINGH

In the first year of him that first  
Was Emperor and King  
A rider came to the Rose red House,  
The House of Pertab Singh. 4

Young he was and an Englishman,  
And a soldier, hilt and heel,  
And he struck fire in Pertab's heart  
As the steel strikes on steel. 8

Beneath the morning stars they rode,  
Beneath the evening sun,  
And their blood sang to them as they rode  
That all good wars are one. 12

They told their tales of the love of women,  
Their tales of East and West,  
But their blood sang that of all their loves  
They loved a soldier best. 16

So ran their joy the allotted days,  
Till at the last day's end  
The Shadow stilled the Rose-red House  
And the heart of Pertab's friend. 20



When morning came, in narrow chest  
The soldier's face they hid,  
And over his fast dreaming eyes  
Shut down the narrow lid.

24

Three were there of his race and creed,  
Three only and no more :  
They could not find to bear the dead  
A forth in all Jodhpore.

28

"O Maharaj, of your good grace  
Send us a Sweeper here :  
A Sweeper has no caste to lose  
Even by an alien bier."

32

"What need, what need ?", said Pertab Singh,  
And bowed his princely head.  
"I have no caste, for I myself  
Am bearing forth the dead."

36

"O Maharaj, O passionate heart,  
Be wise, bethink you yet :  
That which you lose to-day is lost  
Till the last sun shall set."

40

"God only knows," said Pertab Singh,  
"That which I lose to day :  
And without me no hand of man  
Shall bear my friend away."

44

Stately and slow and shoulder-high  
In the sight of all Jodhpore  
The dead went down the rose-red steps  
Upheld by bearers four.

48

When dawn relit the lamp of grief  
Within the burning East  
There came a word to Pertab Singh,  
The soft word of a priest.

52



He woke, and even as he woke  
He went forth all in white,  
And saw the Brahmins bowing there  
In the hard morning light.

56

"Alas ! O Maharaj, alas !  
O noble Pertab Singh !  
For here in Jodhpore yesterday  
Befell a fearful thing."

60

"O here in Jodhpore yesterday  
A fearful thing befell"  
"A fearful thing," said Pertab Singh,  
"God and my heart know well—

64

"I lost a friend."

"More fearful yet !  
When down these steps you passed  
In sight of all Jodhpore you lost  
O Maharaj !—your caste."

68

Then leapt the light in Pertab's eyes  
As the flame leaps in smoke,  
"Thou priest ! thy soul hath never known  
The word thy lips have spoke

72

"My caste ! Know thou there is a caste  
Above my caste or thine,  
Brahmin and Rajput are but dust  
To that immortal line :

76

"Wide as the world, free as the air,  
Pure as the pool of death—  
The caste of all Earth's noble hearts  
Is the right soldier's faith."

80

*Sir Henry Newbolt*



XXXV

A PRAYER

Lord, not for light in darkness do we pray,  
Not that the veil be lifted from our eyes,  
Not that the slow ascension of our day  
Be otherwise.

Not for a clearer vision of the things  
Whereof the fashioning shall make us great,  
Not for remission of the peril and stings  
Of time and fate.

Not for a fuller knowledge of the end  
Whereto we travel, bruised yet unafraid,  
Not that the little healing that we lend  
Shall be repaid.

Not these, O Lord. We would break the bars  
Thy wisdom sets about us ; we shall climb  
Unfettered to the secrets of the stars  
In Thy good time.

We do not crave the high perception swift  
When to refrain were well, and when fulfil,  
Nor yet the understanding strong to sift  
The good from ill.

Not these, O Lord. For these Thou hast revealed.  
We know the golden season when to reap  
The heavy-fruited treasure of the field,  
The hour to sleep.

Not these. We know the hemlock from the rose,  
The pure from stained, the noble from the base,  
The tranquil holy light of truth that glows  
On Pity's face.



We know the paths wherein our feet should press,  
Across our hearts are written Thy decrees,  
Yet now, O Lord, be merciful to bless  
With more than these. 30

Grant us the will to fashion as we feel,  
Grant us the strength to labour as we know,  
Grant us the purpose, ribbed and edged with steel,  
To strike the blow.

Knowledge we ask not—knowledge Thou hast lent,  
But, Lord, the will—there lies our bitter need,  
Give us to build above the deep intent 40  
The deed, the deed.

*John Dirnkwater*

## XXXVI

### LEISURE

What is this life if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare,

No time to stand beneath the boughs  
And stare as long as sheep or cows.

No time to see, when woods we pass,  
Where squirrels hide their nuts in grass,

No time to see, in broad daylight,  
Streams full of stars, like skies at night.

No time to turn at Beauty's glance,  
And watch her feet, how they can dance.



No time to wait till her mouth can  
Enrich that smile her eyes began.

A poor life this if, full of care,  
We have no time to stand and stare.

*William Henry Davies*

### XXXVII

#### WANDER THIRST

Beyond the East the sun-rise, beyond the West the sea,  
And East and West the wander thirst that will not let me  
be ;

It works in me like madness, dear, to bid me say good bye;  
For the seas call and the stars call, and Oh ! the call of the  
sky !

I know not where the white road runs, nor what the blue  
hills are ;

But a man can have the sun for a friend, and for his guide  
a star ;

And there's no end of voyaging when once the voice is  
heard,

For the rivers call and the roads call, and oh ! the call of  
the birds !

Yonder the long horizon lies, and there by night and day  
The old ships draw to home again, the young ships sail  
away ; 10

And come I may, but go I must, and, if men ask you why,  
You may put the blame on the stars and the sun and the  
white road and the sky.

*Gerald Gould*



## XXXVIII

### THE QUEEN'S RIVAL

#### I

QUEEN GULNAAR sat on her ivory bed,  
Around her countless treasures were spread ;

Her chamber walls were richly inlaid  
With agate, prophory, onyx and jade ;

4

The tissues that veiled her delicate breast  
Glowed with the hues of a lapwing's crest ;

But still she gazed in her mirror and sighed  
"O King, my heart is unsatisfied."

8

King Feroz bent from his ebony seat :  
"Is thy least desire unfulfilled, O Sweet ?

"Let thy mouth speak and my life be spent  
To clear the sky of thy discontent."

12

"I tire of my beauty, I tire of this,  
Empty splendour and shadowless bliss ;

"With none to envy and none gainsay,  
No savour or salt hath my dream or day."

16

Queen Gulnaar sighed like a murmuring rose ;  
"Give me a rival, O King Feroz."

#### II

King Feroz spoke to his Chief Vizier :  
"Lo ! ere to-morrow's dawn be here,

"Send forth my messengers over the sea,  
To seek seven beautiful brides for me ;



“Radiant of feature and regal of mien,  
Seven handmaids meet for the Persian Queen.”

24

.....  
Seven new moon tides at the Vesper call  
King Feroz led to Queen Gulnaar's hall

A young queen eyed like the morning star :  
“I bring thee a rival, O Queen Gulnaar.”

28

But still she gazed in her mirror and sighed :  
“O King, my heart is unsatisfied.”

Seven queens shone round her ivory bed,  
Like seven soft gems on a silken thread,

32

Like seven fair lamps in a royal tower,  
Like seven bright petals of Beauty's flower.

Queen Gulnaar sighed like a murmuring rose :  
“Where is my rival, O King Feroz ?”

36

### III

When spring winds wakened the mountain floods,  
And kindled the flame of the tulip buds,

When bees grew loud and days grew long,  
And the peach groves thrilled to the oriole's song,

40

Queen Gulnaar sat on her ivory bed,  
Decking with jewels her exquisite head ;

And still she gazed in her mirror and sighed  
“O King, my heart is unsatisfied”

44

Queen Gulnaar's daughter, two springtimes old,  
In blue robes bordered with tassels of gold.



Ran to her knee like a wildwood fay,  
And plucked from her hand the mirror away 48

Quickly she set on her own light curls  
Her mother's fillet with fringes of pearls ;

Quickly she turned with a child's caprice  
And pressed on the mirror a swift, glad kiss. 52

Queen Gulnaar laughed like a tremulous rose :  
"Here is my rival, O King Feroz."

*Sarojini Naidu*

### XXXIX

#### ECSTASY

Heart, O my heart ! lo, the springtime is waking  
    In meadow and grove.  
Lo, the mellifluous *koels* are making  
    Their paeans of love.  
Behold the bright rivers and rills in their glancing,  
    Melodious flight,  
Behold how the sumptuous peacocks are dancing  
    In rhythmic delight. 8

Shall we in the midst of life's exquisite chorus  
    Remember our grief,  
O heart, when the rapturous season is o'er us  
    Of blossom and leaf ?  
Their joy from the birds and streams let us borrow,  
    O heart ! let us sing,  
The years are before us for weeping and sorrow.....  
    Today it is spring.

*Sarojini Naidu*







## WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE 1564-1616

### *The Quality of Mercy*

These lines are taken from Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice." If you find the play difficult read the story of the play in Lamb's "Tales from Shakespeare." Portia is pleading with Shylock to be merciful to Bassanio. The speech is a fine example of climax. Little by little more and more passion is put into it till in the last six lines the lines become a passionate cry for mercy.

Strained—With effort, artificial. Mercy should be spontaneous.

The mightiest in the mightiest—Those who are most powerfull are most merciful. Portia is trying to make Shylock realise his power and because of it to be merciful.

Becomes—Suits, befits, looks well on.

Temporal—Of this life, Opposed to spiritual.

Seasons—Makes pleasant.

Salvation—Saving of the soul. Deliverance from sin and its consequences.

The last three lines refer to a prayer which Christ taught his disciples and which is known as the Lord's prayer, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive those who owe debts to us" prayed Christ.

These lines are blank verse i.e., without rhyme.

Each line is of ten syllables though this varies.

The stress is speech stress.

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## JOHN MILTON 1603—1674

### *On His Blindness*

This sonnet shows a great man in adversity. Adversity brings out our inner attitude. Those whose minds are small complain and blame others. But the great bear misfortune patiently and try to make the best of it. Milton became



blind in 1652. He did his greatest work in the third of his lifetime that remained. "Paradise Lost" and "Paradise Regained" were written when he was blind.

Light—eyesight.

In this dark world and wide—It became dark to him.  
Compare this sonnet with the following lines from "Samson Agonistes."

I, dark in light, exposed

To daily fraud, contempt, abuse and wrong,

Within doors and without, still as a fool.

In power of others, never in my own:

Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.

Talent—Special aptitude, faculty, gift. Originally the word meant a coin. Read "The New Testament" Matthew XXV 14—30 to find out its origin. Milton's talent was his poetic imagination though his greatest work was yet to be done.

I fondly ask—Goes with the first line "When I consider.

Milton means to say, "I ask myself whether God demands what I cannot perform as it is from him that my affliction comes."

This poem is a sonnet. In Italian a sonnet means a little sound. A sonnet is a lyric of fourteen lines with a formal rhyme scheme. The form that Milton uses is called the Italian or Miltonic form.

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ROBERT HERRICK 1591—1674

*To Blossoms*

Blossoms are symbol of human life. Like us they are shortlived. Symbolism is common in our poetry. Life's journey is compared to a journey in a boat in so many of our poems.



Here the poet points out that human life is transitory like the blossoms. They bloom for a day and then fade away. So also man lives for a short while.

Pledges—A pledge is a promise. Many blossoms are a promise of much fruit.

Date—Duration, term of life (archaic or poetical meaning only).

Leaves—i.e. a book.

Brave—All meanings are here. Courageous, finely dressed, honest.

Glide—go silently.

Herrick is a perfect master of metrical effect turning everything that he touches into wistful prettiness.

## JOHN DRYDEN 1631—1700

### *MacFlecknoe*

This is a piece of satire. Satirical writing attacks human weaknesses in order to correct them. The satirist denounces his opponents by using the weapons of irony and innuendo.

Dryden was a great satirist of the seventeenth century. His "Absalom and Achitophel" is the greatest political satire in English. MacFlecknoe is a great personal satire.

MacFlecknoe, is directed against Shadwell, the leading Whig poet of Dryden's age. MacFlecknoe means "The son of Flecknoe." Flecknoe was an Irish Catholic priest and a very poor versifier. He became a byword for dulness. Dryden calls Shadwell MacFlecknoe, i.e. the son of Flecknoe and consequently as dull as him.

Fate—Appointed lot of a person. Death.

Augustus—The first Roman Emperor who succeeded his uncle Julius Caesar at the age of nineteen. He died at the age of seventy-six.



Issue of a large increase—Many children. Poets who wrote verse as bad as his own.

Debate—discuss, consider, ponder.

Wit—Intelligence, understanding.

Deviate—Turn aside (from truth or intelligence).

Make a lucid interval—May enable them to write good poetry now and then.

Night—Symbol of ignorance and dullness.

His rising fogs prevail upon the day—His dullness shuts out all intelligence.

Goodly fabric—Shadwell was a fat man. So his body is called 'goodly fabric.' Fabric—frame, structure.

Supine—Lying face upward. Disinclined for exertion.

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OLIVER GOLDSMITH 1728—1774

*The Village Preacher*

These lines are taken from "The Deserted Village." In this poem Goldsmith laments the change that came into English village life with changing economic conditions. He looks back wistfully upon 'the days that are no more.' The couplet becomes in the hands of Goldsmith a mild vehicle of reflection and of coloured descriptions threaded with homeliness. Compare the use of the couplet in the previous extract with its use in this and note how the tone has changed. There are sympathetic memories everywhere in "The Deserted Village" and this is only one of them.

Copse—Coppice, underwood. Undergrowth.

Wild—Because no one cares for them now.

Mansion—House. A typical eighteenth century use of this word.

Country—Countryside. Village,

Passing rich with forty pounds a year—Because he was contented.



Ran his godly race—(poetical Lived a holy life.)

Place—Rank, place in life. He was unambitious.

Fawn—Behave servilely. Cringe to a patron.

Doctrines fashioned to the varying hour—He did not change his views for pleasing those in power.

Rise—Rise in life. Get rank and power.

Vagrant train—Wandering beggars.

Claimed kindred—Wanted to be treated as a relation and was treated. Normally people throw off their needy relations and have nothing to do with them. The preacher would not do so.

Broken—Broken in body. Disabled.

Scan—To examine minutely. The preacher was so much moved by the misery of these disabled soldiers that he never cared to ask whether they deserved his charity or not.

"So long as one has not developed a perfect sense of justice he should prefer to err rather on the side of mercy than commit the slightest act of injustice."

Brighter worlds—i.e., Better morals. Heaven.

Dismayed—Frightened (the dying man with thoughts of hell or the consequences of his sins).

Control—Power. Here it means 'influence.'

Praise—Of the goodness of God who forgave sinners.

Prevailed with double sway—Truth from his lips had double power. Others only preached. He practised what he preached. So his words had more force.

Service—Worship.

Rustic—Villager.

---



## WILLIAM BLAKE 1757—1827

*The Piping Song*

Blake was a poet who saw truth in symbols and dreams. Even as a child he saw in visions God's forehead and a tree full of angles. As a song writer he compares with Shakespeare. He was an extremely original man and his poems are quite different from the poems of his contemporaries.

'The Piping song' is a simple poem. Only great poets write simple poems for simplicity in poetry is the result of much skill. The poet represents himself as a shepherd piping happy songs. He sees a child in a cloud who asks him to sing a song about Jesus Christ. (The lamb is a symbol of innocence and purity. Jesus Christ is spoken of as The Lamb of God). The poet does so. Again the child asks him to sing happy songs. On hearing these the child weeps with joy. Finally the child asks him to write down his song so that other children may read them and be happy. This the poet does and writes his "Song of Innocence" of which this is the first poem. You should read both Blake's "Songs of Innocence" and 'Songs of Experience.'

Reed—"The largest of the grasses found in the British Islands." In older times shepherds made pipes from reed,

And I made a rural pen—Rural means belonging to the country. I made songs about the countryside.

—————

## THOMAS GRAY 1716—1771

*Elegy written in a Country Churchyard*

Palgrave calls this poem "perhaps the noblest stanzas written in our language" and Johnson says: "In the character of the Elegy I rejoice to concur with the common reader: for by the common sense of readers uncorrupted with literary prejudices must be finally decided all claim to poetical honours. The churchyard abounds in images which find a mirror in every mind and with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo. The four stanzas beginning "yet even these bones" are to me original; I have never seen the



otions in any other place! yet he that reads them here perceives himself that he has always felt them. Had Gray written often thus it had been vain to blame and useless to praise him." This poem is popular because it deals with great themes death and the brevity of life. It is neat and is easily quotable. There is a sad and delicate feeling for Nature and the humble life of the poor. Probably the churchyard of which Gray was thinking was the grave yard at Stoke Poges where he now lies buried.

Carlew—Bell rung in the evening (in the middle ages to put out fires).

Knell—Parting bell rung at death.

Lea—Pasture land.

Tinkling—Of sheep bells.

Moping—Dull, silent.

Mouldering heap—graves.

Hamlet—Village (Small).

Incense-breathing Morn—Morning with many perfumes.

Horn—Of the huntsman.

Glebe—Sod in cultivated ground.

Jocund—Happily.

Ambition—Abstract for concrete. Ambitious persons.

Grandeur— " " " great persons.

Annals—Records.

Boast of heraldry—Heraldry is the science of recording genealogies and blazoning coats of arms. Pride of aristocratic birth.

Pomp—Show.

Impute—Put upon.

Trophy—A memorial.

Aisle—A corridor or passage in a church. Any lateral division of any part of a church.

Vault—Roof. Fretted—Ornamented (with more detail than art).

Anthem—Sacred music.

Storied urn—An urn inscribed with pictures that tell a story. Urn—A vessel in which the ashes of the dead were deposited.

Animated—Life like.

Pregnant—Full of.



Celestial fire—Divine inspiration  
 Waked...lyre—Became a great musician.  
 Penury—Great poverty.  
 Rage—Enthusiasm.  
 Genial current of the soul--Desires.  
 Hampden—English patriot (1594-1643) who opposed unjust taxes. Mute, inglorious Milton—Some unknown poet who with technical knowledge could have become as great a poet as Milton. Cromwell—(1599-1658) was regarded throughout the eighteenth century as one who had sacrificed his country to his ambition.  
 Circumscribed—Limited.  
 Ingenuous—Frank.  
 Or heap...Muse's flame—Write poems to flatter the rich and proud.  
 Sequestered—Secluded. Withdrawn.  
 Tenour--Course.  
 Uncouth—Savage, odd.  
 Unlettered Muse—Uneducated poet.  
 Precinct—Boundry, limits.  
 Drops—Tears.  
 Thee—Gray himself.  
 Wan—Pale.  
 Forlorn—Lost.  
 Lay—Verses.  
 Graved—Engraved.  
 Thorn—Hawthorn tree.  
 Recompense—Reward.

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## WILLIAM WORDSWORTH 1770—1850

### *Three Years she grew*

A great poet of nature and one of the very greatest in English literature was Wordsworth. He along with Coleridge and others led the revolt against the theme of town manners and the artificial way of writing in the eighteenth century. Wordsworth was anxious to prove that the highest imagination could be embodied in "a selection of language really used by men." So he consciously tried to simplify his diction—not always with success. He had placed in the country's quiet solitude first by his work as an humble official and later



by his own choice. He not only drew upon Nature for refreshment but reflected deeply upon how and why Nature influenced man.

This thought can be seen in this poem. Here Wordsworth is describing a girl who is 'educated' by Nature.

Law and impulse—The influences that restrain and the influences that impel or move forward. Training a child means training him to curb some of his impulses and to give free expression to others. I will tell this child which of its impulses it should curb and which express.

An overseeing power—A power like a nurse or a supervisor to prevent it from coming to harm.

Fawn—Young deer.

The silence and the calm of mute insensate things *i.e.*, the calm that comes from living habitually with nature. The mute insensate things are so only to the superficial eye. As one lives one realises that the life in nature is one of which each one of us is a part and there is nothing 'dead!' Living in harmony with nature gives one, according to Wordsworth, a calm which can be seen in the face. As he says further on in this poem.

And beauty born of murmuring sound.

Shall pass into her face.

Vital—Life giving.

Palgrave calls this poem 'The Education of Nature' and this gives its leading thought. Who Lucy was we do not know. She died young and Wordsworth often mentions her, as for example,

She lived unknown, and few could know.

When Lucy ceased to be.

But she is in her grave, and oh.

The difference to me !



*The Daffodils*

During a walk along the margin of Ullswater Wordsworth saw a host of golden daffodils growing close to the water side. In the words of the sister Dorothy the Daffodils "tossed and reeled and danced, and seemed as if they verily laughed with the wind that blew upon them over the lake. They looked so gay, ever glancing, ever changing.

Wordsworth was deeply impressed by the beauty of the scene. In this poem he gives vivid expression to the rapture that he felt.

Among the beauties of the poem the student should note the two similes. The never ending line of the daffodils is compared to "the stars that shine and twinkle on the milky way and their agitation (movement) to the dancing waves.

Wordsworth had a theory that poetry should be written not at the moment of the greatest feeling but later in "emotion recollected in tranquillity." We see an example of that here.

Lonely as a cloud—A beautiful simile but only a simile. Wordsworth had both his wife and his sister Dorothy with him on this occasion. Perhaps he felt alone and that is why he said this.

All at once—Expresses the shock of pleasure with which he saw them.

Sprightly—Vivacious, lively gay.

Jocund—Merry, pleasant.

Wealth—Of memories. "This is an expression of the strong and real delight which Wordsworth felt in natural beauty; enjoying the sight of dancing flowers gives him this delight not for the moment only, but to be stored up as wealth and felt again whenever memory recalls it."

Pensive—Thoughtful.

The golden daffodils gleam before the mind's eye and the poet enjoys this vision in his solitary moments. "We learn



here how Wordsworth had a disposition to be affected more than other men by absent things as if they were present."

Wordsworth often compared flowers to stars. In this poem "To The Daisy" we have the following stanza.

In see thee glittering from afar—  
And then thou art a pretty star,  
Not quite so fair as many are  
In heaven above thee!

Yet like a star with glittering crest,  
Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest;—  
Many peace come never to his nest  
Who shall reprove thee!

*The World is Too Much With Us*

Wordsworth was at his best in sonnets and elegies. He wrote about five hundred Sonnets and this sonnet is one of his best. Here he gives us his views on the materialistic tendencies of his age. Men who lives in cities care little for nature and so lose some of the healing, soothing influence. He prefers to lose the advantages of "civilization" in order to be closer to nature. Some of Wordsworth's best lines are about the influence of Nature on Man, as for example the following which describe the joy of spring.

It was an April morning fresh and clear,  
The rivulet delighting in its strength,  
Ran with a young man's speed; and yet the voice  
Of waters which the river had supplied  
Was softened down into a vernal tone.  
The spirit of enjoyment and desire,  
And hopes and wishes from all living things  
Went circling, like a multitude of sounds.

Getting and spending—All our values are money values.



We lay waste our powers—of enjoyment of nature. We have learnt in us the power to enjoy nature and be influenced by it but we never use it.

Little we see in nature that is ours—ours to enjoy, to take delight in.

Given our hearts away—to “the word,” to worldly interests.

Sordid—Mean, ignoble.

The sea that bares her bosom to the moon—Wordsworth enjoyed the sight of sheets of water. As for example in the following lines.

### *The Calm*

And dead still water lay upon my mind.  
Even with a weight of pleasure, and the sky,  
Never before so beautiful, sank down.  
Into my heart, and held my like a dream.

Pagan—Literally a mere “countryman” one who knows nothing of any of the great religions. An un-enlightened person.

A creed outworn—A religion that is now not believed in. Wordsworth is thinking of the religion of the ancient Greeks which made them see nature as alive, god and goddesses abounding in it everywhere.

Proteus—Sea-god of the Greeks. He changed shape continually as the waves do.

Triton—A sea god. In greek mythology he is the son of Posidon and Amphitrite each of a race of minor sea-gods usually represented as men with fish-tails and sometimes with forefeet of horse and carrying a shell trumpet.

### *Michael*

This is a poem about country life and shows the strength of human affection. Wordsworth often chose subjects from humble life and by preference from village life. He did so



deliberately because he believed that "among such people the essential passions of the heart find a better soil to mature in, and are more easily comprehended and more durable, are incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of Nature and expressed in a simple language which hourly communion with Nature teaches." Thomas Hardy had the same views. Have you read any of his poems or novels?

Michael is a peasant proprietor, a type whom Wordsworth knew well in his boyhood. The poem is a master piece of serious simplicity.

Tumultuous—noisy—uproarious.

Pastoral—(Land) used for pasture.

Dell—A small valley usually with three-clad sides.

Straggling—dispersed.

Homely—Simple, plain.

Frugal—Sparing (of food), economical.

South—The wind came from the south. The South wind.

Subterraneous—Under the earth. Since Michael lived in the mountains, the South seemed to him to come from under the earth (since it came from the valleys).

Stirring—Moving, active.

Mess of pottage—Mess a liquid or pulpy food. Pottage means soup. Liquid or mixed food

Stirrings of inquietude —Anxiety (of Michael for his son).

Done him female service—Rocked his cradle, as we learn a few lines later.

Albeit—Although.

Coppice—Small trees grown for periodical cutting.

Sapling—A young tree.

Urchin—Boy (roguish or mischievous).

Blasts—Storms.



Emanations—Things issuing from a source (especially virtues, moral feelings etc.)

Forfeiture—That which he had to give as penalty.

Patrimonial—which he had inherited.

Resource—Means.

Diligent—Steady and hardworking.

Parish Boy—A boy who lived on the charity of the parish.

Jocund—Happy, merry.

Forthwith—At once.

Loth—Unwilling.

Mould—Poetical for grave.

Covenant—Bargain, contract.

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SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE 1772—1834.

### *Love*

This poem is a ballad. A ballad is a short simple narrative told lyrically. "The names ballad, ballade, ballet are from the late Latin and Italian *ballare*, to dance; hence it was long assumed that the lyrical story so named was bound up with dance origin." Early ballads are anonymous and extremely touching. I quote one short ballad to show you the sort of poems early ballads were.

I wish I were where Helen lies;

Day and night on me she cries;

O that I were where Helen lies.

On fair Kirconnell lea !

Curst be the heart thought that the thought,

And curst the hand the fired the spot.

When in my arms burd Helen dropt,

And died to succour me !



O think na ye my heart was sair  
 When my love dropt down and spak nae mair  
 there did she swoon wi' meikle care

On fair Kirconnell lea.

As I went down the water-side  
 None but my foe to be my guide,  
 None but my foe to be my guide

On fair Kirconnell lea !

I lighted down my sword to draw,  
 I hacke'd him in pieces sma;  
 I hacke'd him in pieces sma;

For her sake that died for me,  
 O Helen fair, beyond compare !  
 I'll make a garland of thy hair  
 Shall bind my heart for ever mair

Until the day I die.

O that I was where Helen lies !  
 Day and night on me she cries;  
 Out of my bed she bids me rise,  
 Says, 'Haste and come to me !

O Helen fair! O Helen chaste !  
 If I were with thee, I were blest.  
 Where thou lies low and takes thy rest

On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish my grave were growing green,  
 A winding sheet drawn over my een,  
 And I in Helen's arms lying.

On fair Kirconnell lea.

I wish I were where Helen lies;  
 Night and day on me she cries;  
 And I am weary of the skies,

For her sake that died for me.



Burd—Lady. Sair—Sore. Spak nae mair—Spoke on more.  
Meikle care—much grief. een eyes.

A ballad of this type is the true ballad. We do not know who composed it.

In later centuries poets tried to copy this type of ballad. These new ballads are called literary ballads because they are conscious copies of the old ballads. Coleridge's 'Love is one such. It is not only consciously a ballad it is also consciously romantic. Everything that is remote from the age it was written in is idealised. 'Love' was originally intended as an introduction to a longer poem never written

Ministers—Servants.

Lay—Song, short lyric or narrative poem meant to be sung.

Doleful—Sad.

Hoary—Old.

Pined—Wasted away with fruitless longing.

Fieend—The Devil. Evil spirit.

Expiate—Make amends for.

Timorous—Timid, shy.

—————

GEORGE GORDON, LORD BYRON 1788—1824

### *The Ocean*

These stanzas are taken from "childe Harold," Canto IV. Byron loved the energy of nature and that comes out again and again in his descriptions of the storm, the ocean when it is agitated, mountain torrents etc. There is a certain amount of meditative musing in his descriptions though he never goes deep into the mystery of Nature as Wordsworth did. Nature for him is a back ground for the activities of man and it is in man only that he is interested. Goethe said truly of him: "The moment he reflects he is a child."

Steal—Withdraw myself.

Ravage—Ruin. Destruction.



Lay—Lay is used for lie for the sake of rhyme. Byron was much criticised for this indefensible solecism—Using Lay as an intransitive verb.

Thunderstrike—Strike with thunder i.e., cannonade.

Leviathan—Sea monster. Oak leviation—huge ship.

Thier clay creator—man (since he is made of clay).

Yeast of wages. - Yeast is a yollow substance used in brewing beer. making wine and raising bread  
yeast of waves means seething surging waves  
(seething and surging like yeast).

The Armada's Pride---refers to the Spanish Armada and how it was destroyed by a tempest,

Or---And.

Spoils of Trafalgar---The student of English history will remember how the captured vessels at Trafalgar were lost in the strong gale that blew the next day after the battle.

The armaments etc.--This stanza is regarded by competent critics as the finest complete stanza in the whole of "Childe Harold."

Washed them power--Brought them to power by trade.

Then glorious mirror etc.--The power of God is seen in the storms at sea

And I have loved thee ocean--Byron loved swimming (probably because he was lame and could not run).

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY 1792---1822

*To a Skylark*

Shelley is at his best in his lyrics. He was in some ways the greatest English lyric poet.



'To a Skylark' is one of the most beautiful of Shelley's poems inspired by the singing of a skylark when he was at Leghorn in the spring of 1820. this poem Todhunter says. "The very verse suggests the flight of the bird with its fluttering pauses and sidelong swervings and upward gyrations."

Shelley had merical tact by nature, This can be seen in this poem by the use of the long last line so well suited to the theme.

Wert---Obsolete past. Wast.

Unpremediated art---Exuberant stains of spontaneous-music

Keen as are the arrows---The morning star is compared to Artemis, goddess of hunting.

All the earech and air---The sounds are echoed and re-echoed all round and do not proceed merely from one single-point.

Bare---Withtout clouds.

Like a poet hidden---'Withdrawn from the world but living in a bright world of his own, the world of intelligence.

Singing hymns unhidden---Shelly says in his 'A Defence of Poetry.' "Poetry is not like reasoning, a power to be exerted accorted according to the determination of the will. A man cannot say. "I will compose poetry." The greatest poet even cannot say it; for the mind in creation is as a fading coal, which some invisible influence, like an inconstant wind, awakens to transitory brightness; this power arises from within, like the colour of a flower which fades and changes



as it is developed, and the conscious portions of our nature are unprophetic either of its approach or its departure.,'

Compare this stanza with the following lines of Shelley :

On a poet's lips I slept  
 Dreaming like a love-adept  
 In the sound his breathing kept;  
 Nor seeks nor finds he mortal blisses,  
 But feeds on the aerial kisses  
 Of shapes that haunt thoughts wildernesses.

Unbeholden---Unseen (a rare use).

Aerial hue---Faint coloured light.

Deflowered---Robbed (of its scent).

Heavy---winged thieves---The warm winds that rob the flowers of their scent. The winds move slowly as if their wings were laden.

In these six stanzas (7 to 12) six comparisons are made to find what the bird is most like.

Walking or sleep---You must know that death is nothing. Otherwise if you feared death as we can do, your song could not be so happy.

We look before and after---Compare with "Hamlet," IV, IV 'Sure, he that made us with such large discourse. Looking before and after.....

Should---Will be compelled to.

### *The Cloud*

"The Cloud" is nature myth of flawless beauty. The complete identification of the poet with his subject, the superb rush of music, the crystalline clearness of the picture, not for a moment marred by over-profusion of metaphor as



in "The Skylark," these things make criticism tongue-tied.  
Even to comment on its beauties is an impertinence. It is  
made for our wonder and delight

Arthur Compton---Rickett.

Note the double rhymes---Showers, flowers; shade, laid.  
"Their mothers' breast---The branches.  
Flail---Hand threshing-implement.  
Whiten---With hailstones.  
Aghast---With fear.  
Sublime---High up.  
Skiey bowers---i.e., skyhigh, up.  
Sanguine---Blood-red.  
Rack---Driven clouds.  
Jag---Uneven indentation.  
Pall---Cloth spread over coffin, usually black or purple.  
Orbed---Heavenly.  
White fire---Moon light.  
Zone---Girdle.  
Hurricane---Storm with violent wind.  
Sphere fire---Sun's rays.  
Nursling---Infant. Bred or fostered by the nurse.  
Cenotaph---Monument.

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JOHN KEATS 1795---1821,

*To Autumn*

This poem is an ode. An ode is a lyric, usually rhymed, dignified in subject, mood and style.

This is a picture of autumn in black and white. Colour is absent from its imagery except in the last two lines of the last stanza. There is a warmth in the ode like the early autumn sun. It is dignified and simple in structure. Images are selected to arouse feeling in the reader. Oliver Elton's remarks on Keats' odes and on this ode in particular are noteworthy. "Generally. Keats tries to concentrate, as far as ever the law of beauty permits; every line is like a bough that is weighted down with fruit to the breaking point. This effect is best seen in the most impeccable of all. *To Autumn*. The scented landscape in the first stanza, and the symphony of natural sounds in the third would have been enough for



most poets; but the effect would have been dispersed or confused without the slowly moving or resting figures, in the central verse, of the winnower of the greener: these make the picture human and universal; for the eternal labours of man, as he makes the most of nature, are kept before the eye by a profound instinct for plastic arrangement.

Mellow fruitfulness—Ripe fruits.

Maturing sun—Which ripens fruit.

Thatch eves—Overhanging edges of roof or thatch.

Plump—Fill out.

Later flowers—Flowers appearing late in autumn.

Overbrimmed their clammy cells—"Filled the sticky cells of honeycomb to overflowing."

Winnowing—Fanning. The wind parts the locks of hair.

Drowsed—Made sleepy.

Swath—"The width of the sweep of a scythe."

Twined flowers—Flowers that grow round the corn.

Like—In the character of.

Oozings—From the cider-press.

Bloom—Redden.

Stubble—Stumps of grain left sticking up after harvest.

Choir—"The word is applied to the dancing, humming swarms of gnats on warm autumn evenings."

Sallow—A willow tree, especially of a few shrubby variety.

Bourn—Boundry. Here used of the hills.

Croft—Field.

Gathering swallows—Preparing to migrate.

### *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*

In many respects the best and most characteristic lyric of Keats, is in the ballad metre. Romanic poets profess to be consumed by a hopeless passion and that mood is expressed in this poem. The lady is cruel. She is, as the title in French tells us, the beautiful lady without pity.

Sedge—A grass-like plant growing in marshes.

Haggard—Wild looking, especially as a result of fatigue or worry:



Zone---Girdle.

As she did love--She never tells him she loves him.

Manna dew---Sweet juice from marsh ash and other plants.

Sure in language strange---He hopes she said it but she never did.

Grot---Grotte; artificial, ornamental cave.

Kisses four---Why four? Two for each eye.

The latest dream---Because after that he could not sleep.

Thrall---Slavery.

Gloam---Evening twilight.

Sojourn---Make temporary stay.

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THOMAS HOOD---1799---1845

*The Song of the Shirt*

Hood is known for his funs but he was at heart a serious writer with deep sympathy for the under-privileged. He has a vivid sense of the unhappy side of and the power to present it simply and forcefully. Such poems as "The Song of the Shirt" and "The Bridge of Sighs" show his gift of dealing with human problems in a manner that appealed to the public. The student should read Mrs. Browning's "The Cry of the Children." That poem deals with the "Song of the Shirt" gives us a picture of a poor seamstress who has to work hard to earn a few pennies and is practically killing herself with work. These poems aroused the social conscience of England.

Dolorous pitch---Sad tone.

Barbarous---Uncivilised.

Guesst---Triangular piece let into garment to strengthen or enlarge some part.

A shroud---Her own shroud since this will kill her.

Phantom---Spectre



Grisly—Causing fear.

Flage—Grows less.

Chime—The sound of bells. From "weary chime to chime" means from morning till night since clocks start ringing in the morning and go on till night.

Twit—Reproach.

Respite—Interval for rest or relief.

Thair bring bed---Eyes.

### *Undying Love*

Love outlasts beauty. It does not depend upon that which the senses report to the mind. Beauty is in the last resort pleasurable sensations and sensations are by their

very nature, impermanent. Love lasts longer the beauty.

This is the theme of this sonnet.

Humour—Mood, inclination.

Phantasy—Illusion,

Skims---Is content with the surface and cannot penetrate to the real character.

Wane---Grow less.

As if the rose made summer---But summer makes the rose. It is my love's fair nature that gives her outward beauty. It is that nature that I admire. Not as others who see the beauty only and will cease to love as tan cheek fades.

Compare with Yeats,

But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you  
And all the shadows of your changing face.

Whose health is of no---hue---i.e., is not shown by colour, my love being set above those inconstant and material existence which turn now pale and sickly and now burn red. A poorer or lower love will flourish when the cheek is bright with youth and health and pale and sicken as the cheek fades. No so true love.



## ALFRED, LORD TENNYSON 1809---1892

*Ring out wild Bells*

This is taken from "In Memoriam" a series of poems that Tennyson wrote in grief at the loss of his friend, Hallam. "In Memoriam" voices the poet's inner questioning of faith. Tennyson had the temperament of the mystic and desperately wanted to believe that somehow "good shall be the final goal of ill." He believed that social progress will come by means of democratic institutions. This extract voices some such hope.

Ring out wild Bells---Bells are rung on the midnight of December 31 every year.

Ring out the old---There will be a change for the better.

Ring out the false, ring in the true---What this is, is explained in the lines that follow.

Sapse---Weakens.

Feud---Lasting mutual hostility.

Redress---Reparation for wrong.

The dying cause---Party differences.

Manners---Is used in the original sense of morals.

Faithless coldness---Indifference to the welfare of others.

See hood's "Song of the Shirt" above for an example.

Minstrel---Singer, poet.

Civil slander---False propaganda against opponents.

The Christ that is to be---Christ is here a symble for all that is best and noblest in human nature which will express itself in human institutions.

*The Passing of Arthur*

Arthur was a famous king of England about whom many stories are told. One of the stories is that he did not die but went away in a boat to Avilion, an island Paradise. Tennyson took the old story and presented it in a modern form.



Long poems are not popular now but in the age of Tennyson they were. Tennyson's long poems are different from others in the sense that they are a series of poems into which he put all his lyrical resources. Amongst his long poems was the "Idylls of the King" from which this extract is taken. This is not a complete extract but only lines 362—438.

They—Sir Bedivere was carrying King Arthur, sorely wounded through the helmet, down from the rocky ridge to the sea shore, Arthur urges him on lest he should die before reaching the water's edge.

Hove—Rose (with alternate falls by the waves).

Barge—Large ornamented oared vessel (for state occasions)  
Stem to stem—End to end.

Ware—Aware.

Black—stoled A stole is a strip of silk or other material hanging from back of neck over shoulders.

Tingling—As though it hurt the stars to hear it and the heavens suffered a shock from the vibrating cry of grief.

Casque—Helmet.

Chafed—Warmed (by pressing).

Springing east—Rising sun.

Greave—Armour for shins.

Cuisse—Thigh armour.

Onset—Battle. Drops of onset—Blood.

Made—Used to make, in the hall of the palace in Camelot which Sir Bedivere would have in mind.

Brought—a noble chance—Chance of a noble adventure (of fighting against giants or robbers, helping the weak and righting wrongs)

The light that led etc. The Magi or The Three Wise Men of the East, who saw a new star in the



sky and travelled under it till they found  
the new-born Christ. Mathew Chapter 2,  
Verses 1—12.

Myrrh—Gum used in incense.

Round Table—King Arthur's Knights used to sit round  
a round table to show that they were  
all equal. From that the round table came  
to mean the Knights who used to sit round  
it.

An image of the mighty world—As there are all kinds  
of men in the world so there were all sorts of  
Knights in the Round Table.

Nourish—Nurse, live.

Avilien—Avalon or Avallon—Celtic Paradise.

Crowned—Perhaps surrounded. But more probably  
the sea is seen down a valley, small space of  
bright sea crowning the beauty of woods and  
fields, while the open sea is hidden on each  
side by hills.

Swan—The legend of the swan's dirge is a very old one.  
According to it for once the swan's voice is  
tuneful when it sings its own death-song as  
it floats down a stream to disappear into the  
distant ocean.

Hull—Frame of a ship.

Mere—Lake. Pond.

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ROBERT BROWNING—1812—1889

*The Pied Piper*

This is a grotesque poem but extremely beautiful.  
There is enjoyment of an old story, humour and extra  
vagarza. To get the best out of it read it aloud.

Spied—Saw.

Ditty—Song, poem.

Vermin—Mammals and birds injurious to game, crops  
etc., e.g., foxes weasels, rats, mice. In this  
poem 'rats.'



Vats—Large tubs.

Kegs—Small barrels.

Sprat—A fish.

Sharps—and flats—Shrieking noises. Both these words are musical terms.

Noddy—Simpleton, noodle.

Gowns lined with ermine—For the City Fathers.  
Ermine is the name of an animal and also of its fur.

Obese—Fat.

Consternation—Fear, dismay.

Guilder—Obsolete gold coin of the Netherlands.

Paunch—Belly.

Glutinous—Here hungry to excess. Gluten is the name of an animal secretion.

Swarthy—Sunburnt, dark.

The trump of doom—The trumpet which the angel will blow on the judgment day and hearing which the dead will rise from their graves. This is a Semitic belief.

Pied—With colours irregularly arranged. This was in the dress of the Piper.

Dangled—Hung.

Old-fangled—Worn shabby.

Vampire—bats—Bats who suck blood.

Adept—Master.

Tawny—Brownish-yellow, tan coloured.

Tripe—Entrails.

Psalter—A medieval instrument like a dulcimer.

Nuncheon—Food, 'Luncheon.'

Puncheon—A short post.

Perked—Thrust forward (impudently).

Claret, Moselle Etc—All costly wines.

Replenish—fill.



- Butt—Wine cask.  
 Rhenish—A German wine.  
 Poke—Pocket, bag.  
 Prime—First.  
 Pottage—Soup.  
 Bate a stiver—Stiver—The smallest coin. Take even  
                   the least coin less.  
 Ribald—Irreverent jester.  
 Justlings—Jostling—rubbing against each other.  
 Pitchings and hustling and pushing.  
 On the rack—In great pain.  
 Bereft—Deprived of.  
 Fallow—Reddish yellow.  
 Burgher's pate—Citizen's head (contemptuous).  
 A text which says—One of the sayings of Christ. "It  
                   is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of  
                   a needle than for a rich man to go to heaven,"  
 Tabor—Small drum especially one to accompany the  
                   pipe.  
 Hosterly or tavern—Inn. A place of refreshment,  
 Trepanned—Trapped, deceived.  
 Score—Bill. Payment due.
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JOHN RUSSELL 1819—1891

### *Ambrose*

Ambrose was one of the most celebrated of the ancient fathers of the church. He was born about 340 A. D. probably at Trier. When he entered the church he sold his goods and distributed the proceeds among the poor. He died in 397 A. D. He is the patron Saint of Milan, of which he was Bishop. The Ambrosian Library there was established in his honour in 1609.



The poem teaches a lesson that we sorely need in India  
Truth is one though its forms are many. Creeds do not  
matter. Living affectionately is much more important  
than professing a belief.

Raiment—Cloth. dress,

The Father of Sin—The Devil. Ambrose thought that  
if he tortured his body he would not fall into sin.  
A Common belief amongst the early Christians.

To God's hand—for God to use, shape or mould as he  
saw fit.

The blessed word—The Bible.

At last he builded a perfect faith—At last he thought  
that he had succeeded in finding a formula or  
form of words which could not admit of any  
doubt or dispute, which could not give an  
excuse for any heresies. It was his main object  
to stop any heresies or false interpretations of  
Christian doctrine : many of these springing  
from questions of the meaning of a word. He  
would define clearly at last what Christ and his  
Apostles had really meant.

So narrow a mind—according to Ambrose. Not really:

The figures and features of his mind—We step down  
Truth, narrow it to suit over selfish prejudices,

Several pillar of fire and cloud—separate guidance—  
The pillar of fire by night and of cloud by day  
guided the Israelites marching under the con-  
mand of Moses in the desert,

Divided essence—The opposite of individual or indi-  
visible To believe that there can be two truths  
is practically as bad as denying that God is  
one

Cramped—Made narrow.

Fit this sign—Take the illustration supplied by com-  
mon water and apply it to the water of life. to



the faith which you believe so vital. That faith may be held in different ways by different persons.

Grace—Mercy of God (shown by a change of heart).

— — — —

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD 1832—1904,

*The Light of Asia*

This is an extract from book III. The Light of Asia is the Lord Gautama Budha. His story is well-known to every Indian child. C. Dinarajadasa says: 'In spite of the learned writings of Western savants, so erudite and so painstaking, to a Buddhist there is but one book that describes his faith as he feels it, and that book is a poem, and not a learned professor's masterpiece of research and learning. It is to Edwin Arnold's poem, "The Light of Asia" that the Buddhist turns as the only book in a Western tongue that fittingly describes the Buddhism that he knows, not that of dry sacred scriptures in a dead language, but the real, living Buddhism of today. It is because Edwin Arnold imagines himself a Buddhist and with his poetic fancy enters into a Buddhist atmosphere, that in his poem the Buddha is the central figure, and so his work is to the Buddhists a satisfactory exposition of Buddhism.'

The sad King—Prince Siddhartha's father, King Suddhodaṇa,

Enthrall—Capture, make slave.

Causeway—Raised road across low or wet place.

Realm—Kingdom.

Fain—Would be glad to.

Channa—His charrioteer.

Hamals—Coolies carrying loads, An Arabic word.

Athwart—Across:

Orts—Refuse scraps, leavings.

Booth—Covered stall in a market.

Swart—Swarthy, dark-skinned.

Blotches—Spots.



Pest—Pestilence, plague.

Elements—In the olden days it was believed that the body was composed of four elements.

Ham—Hock of thigh.

Orbs—Eyes.

Tetters—Skin disease.

Palsy—Paralysis. A condition of utter helplessness.

Issue—A discharge of blood.

Blain—Inflamed sore on skin.

Striped—murderer—The leopard.

Shorn—With head shaved.

Stark—Rigid.

Chapfallen—Jaws fallen down.

Taint—Poison. Some infection.

Nip—Bite.

Span—3 inches.

Ardour—Warmth, eagerness.

Lure—Attraction.

Brahm—God, the Creator.

## CHRISTINA ROSSETTI 1830—1894

### *Up-Hill*

Christina Rossetti had the purest lyrical gift as we can see in this poem. Its simplicity is the result of fine artistic conscience. The road is a symble for life. Life is never easy for those who take it seriously. Up to the last moment one has to struggle.

That inn—Death in which every one finds rest.

The sum—The result i.e., rest.

This lyric uses the fewest words to convey a deep, sad effect. There is one other English poem like it by Scott. I quote it so that you may compare the two poems.



Proud Maisie is in the wood,  
 Walking so early;  
 Sweet Robin sits on the bush  
 Singing so rarely.

"Tell me, thou bonny bird  
 When shall I marry me?"

—'When six braw gentlemen  
 Kirkward shall carry ye !'

'Who makes the bridal bed:  
 Birdie, say truly ?'

—'The grey-headed sexton  
 That delves the grave duly.

"The Glow-worm o'er grave and stone  
 Shall light thee steady;  
 The owl from the steeple sing  
 Welcome, proud lady !

### *Goblin Market*

The best remarks on this poem were made by W. M. Rossetti. He said, "I have more than once heard Christina say that she did not mean anything profound by this fairy-tale—it is not a moral apologue consistently carried out in detail. Still the incidents are such as to be at any rate suggestive, and different minds may be likely to read different messages into them. I find at times that people do not see the central point of the story, such as the authoress intended it, and she has expressed it too, but perhaps not with due emphasis. The foundation of the narrative is this: That the goblins tempt women to eat their luscious but uncanny fruit; that a first taste produces a rabid craving for a second taste; but that the second taste is never accorded and in default of it the women pine away and die. Then comes the central point: Laura having tasted the fruits once, and being at death's door through inability to get a second taste, her sister Lizzie determines to save her at all hazards; so she goes to the goblins, refuses to eat their fruits, and beguiles



them into forcing the fruits upon her with so much insistency that her face is all smeared and steeped with the juices; she gets Laura to kiss and suck these juices off her face, and Laura, having thus obtained the otherwise impossible second taste, rapidly recovers."

Goblin—A mischievous sprite; a fairy.

Bullaces—small plums.

Greengages—A variety of plums.

Damson— " " " "

Bilberry—A kind of berry.

Rushes—Rush is a marshy plant.

Hobbling—To hob is to walk with a limp.

Glen—A narrow valley worn by a river.

Lugs—Pulls, carries with difficulty.

Luscious—full of juice.

Wombat—An Australian animal like a bear, carrying its young in a pouch.

Obtuse—Stupid.

Ratel—A south African animal like a badger in size.

Beck—A small brook.

Leering—to leer is to give a sly, side long glance.

Tendrils—Shoots of a plant by which it attaches itself for support.

Whisk-tailed—With tail that moved rapidly.

Purloin—steal.

Paria—An evergreen bush.

Gloy—Satisfy till no desire is left.

Rind—External covering of a fruit.

Upbraiding—Reproaches.

Blow—Blooms.

Nap—Downy covering.

Pellucid—Perfectly clear.



- Lumbering---Heavy. Flying with difficulty.  
 Placid---Calm. The opposite of anxious.  
 Flags---Plants with sword-shaped leaves.  
 Iterated---Repeated.  
 Succous---Juicy.  
 Balked---Defeated.  
 Hawking--Selling by shouting the names of their wares,  
 Kernal-stone---Stone inside a fruit.  
 Drouth---Thirst. Want of rain or water.  
 Cankorous---Which eats away the flesh.  
 Mopping---Making grimaces.  
 Mowing---Making a wry face.  
 Pannier --A bread basket.  
 Russet--Reddish brown.  
 Dun---Dark.  
 Parleying---Talking.  
 Pates--Heads.  
 Demurring---Objecting.  
 Cross-grained---Perverse.  
 Obstreperouesly---Noisily.  
 Beacon---A light to guide.  
 Cram---Force. Fill against her will.  
 Scudded---Ram (with a strait, easy motion).  
 Smart---Pain.  
 Copse---A wood of small growth.  
 Dingle---A hollow. A narrow valley.  
 Dogged---Followed.  
 Gibe---A mocking remarks.  
 Sultry---Dry.  
 Wormwood---Bitter. Name of a bitter plant.  
 Gorged---Ate her fill.



Flagging---Languid or spiritless.

Antidote---Counterpoison.

## MATTHEW ARNOLE 1822—1888

### *Rugby Chapel*

Matthew Arnold wrote this poem in memory of his Father Thomas Arnold, the famous headmaster of Rugby and professor of modern history at Oxford. Thomas Arnold was born in 1795 and died in 1842. The central thought of the poem, that Thomas Arnold was not content with saving his own soul but devoted all his energies to the salvation of others, haunted Matthew Arnold and is repeated in one of his most touching letters to his mother many years after his father's death.

Matthew Arnold is at his best in memorial verses. There is something elegiac in the cast of his mind. Even his prose works are tinged with melancholy.

When we read this poem we are reminded of the life that Gandhiji led, and that is one of the reasons why we have included this poem in this book. Great men always live more for others than for themselves. This poem is written in lyrical metre without rhyme.

Chapel—A place of Christian worship subordinate to a church, attached to a school or a college.

Rugby—Name of a famous public school in England.

Dank—Damp, wet.

Drifts—Anything driven together is called drift.

Apace—Quickly.

Austere—Hard. Without decoration.

The...art laid—Since the grave of Thomas Arnold was in the chapel.

Sounding labour house vast—The universe. Arnold is not speaking here like a Christian. He is thinking that force is not lost in nature and so the force of character that his father had must still be active somewhere.

Succour---Help.

Oblivion—Forgetfulness.



Glut—Literally to feast to satiety.

Gorges---A gorge is a narrow pass. Georges and mountains in this line stand for the difficulties of life.

Breached—Cut, broken.

Gaunt taciturn host---Gaunt means thin. Taciturn means silent. This may be a symbol of life which at the end asks us what we have done,

Avalanche---Mass of snow and ice sliding down from a mountain.

Bluster---Bully or swagger.

Cringe---Beg. Behave like a slave.

Arid---Dry, without sap,

Tempered with fire---Made strong with fire (as steel is made strong).

Marshallad---Arranged. Put each in his place.

Ardour---Strong desire (here to save mankind).

Langour---Dulness, listlessness.

Van---Front.

Stragglers---Those who wander away from the true course.

ARTHUR HUGH CLOUGH 1819---1861

*Say Not the Struggle*

The metre of this short moral poem is one which is used for serious subjects. It is iambic, but broken by the accent in all impressive number as in the words, "*fears may be liars:*" "*Seem but a painful inch to gain.*" The lines have alternately  $4\frac{1}{2}$  and 4 feet,

This is a glorification of effort. Do not say it is useless to try. Fears deceive as much as hopes. If hopes are not realised fears may not be realised either. The waves strike against the shore and do not advance, but when the tide comes the ocean goes silently for inland. It fails in one place and succeeds in another. The son does not come only



through the Eastern window. Light can come also from the West.

Creeks—Inlet—A narrow stripe of water going into the land.

—  
TURN DUTT 1856--1877

*Our Casuarina Tree*

Toru Dutt was a gifted Bengali girl poet who died young. After the British conquest of India she was one of the first Indians who contributed to English Literature. Edmund Gosse calls her "that exotic blossom of song." Her *Sheaf and Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan* can still be read with undiminished pleasure. "Our Casuarina Tree" is a poem of memories of childhood.

Casuarina—The wood of this tree is called beefwood.

It is common in Australia.

Python—A large snake that crushes its prey.

Darking—in the dark.

His puny offspring—i.e., small baboons.

Wend—Go.

Dirge—A song of sorrow.

Shingle—Small rounded pebbles lying on sea-shore.

Eerie—Superstitiously timid, weird.

Haply—Perhaps.

Water-wraith—Of water-kelpie, a female spirit in floods and fords, almost universally believed in by country folk 100 years ago. She it was who drowned unfortunate travellers and her voice was heard in the storm.

Classic—Excellent. That which is followed as a model. In the days when Toru Dutt wrote this poem this was the Indian attitude to Europe.

Tranced—without movement, as if in a swoon.

Consecrate a lay—Write a song (in a mood of dedication).



Borrowdale—A romantic valley in "the lake country" in West Cumberland, The quotation is from Wordsworth from his poem "The Yew Tree."

My love defend thee---Because I love you, you will not be forgotten.

HENRY WORDSWORTH LONG FELLOW 1807---1882

*King Robert of Sicily*

The story of King Robert and the angel has come to us from the middle ages. It is a story with a moral---that all power and glory come from God and when God wishes he can take them away. Longfellow tells the story as a ballad though in couplets.

Allemaine---Germany.

Aparalled---Dressed.

Attire---Clothes.

Retinue---Following.

Squires---Served knights and followed them till they became knights in their turn.

'St. John's Eve'---The eve of midsummer day.

Vespers---evening prayers.

The magnificat---A Latin prayer to the glory of God.

Burden or refrain---Words of a song repeated over and over again.

Clerk---Priest (obsolete).

Meet---right, correct.

Exalted---Raised up.

Degree---Rank.

Seditious---Directed against authority.

Lulled---Soothed, put to sleep.

Save---Except.

Saint---Image of a saint.

Groped---Felt with his hands.



Imprecations--Curses.

Stalls--Seats. Seats fixed in a church.

Sexton--He looks after the church and digs graves.

Tumult--Noise.

Vagabond--Wanderer, one having no fixed abode.

Portal--Gate.

Haggard...Weird looking.

Spectre...Ghost.

Despoiled of...Without.

Besprent...Covered (with scattered mud).

Outrage...Insult.

Seneschal...Steward or major dome of a great house in the middle ages.

Scuffling...Echoing to his steps.

Signet ring...Ring used for sealing.

Transfigured...Changed.

Effulgence...Light.

Exaltation...A rapturous motion.

Compassion...Pity.

Imposter...Who claims something to which he has no right.

Audacious...Bold, rude.

Unruffled brow...A calm face.

Jester...Kings and noblemen kept jasters to amuse them  
The jester or fool wore motley and a peculiar cap which was shaped like a bell and had rounded edges.

Scalloped cape...Cap with rounded edges.

Henchmen...Chief attendants, followers.

Tittering...Giggling and laughing.

Boistrous...Rough and loud.

Vaulted...With a high arched roof.

Plaudits...Clapping, applause.



Stalls ..Boxes for horses. There is another meaning of the word. Find it out.

Saturnian reign...*i, e.* the Golden age. Saturn...god of agriculture, father of Zeus the chief of the gods. He is supposed to have ruled the world in a golden age of innocence and plenty.

Benign...Kind.

Enceladus...An imaginary gaint killed by Zeus and supposed to be buried under Mount Etna in Sicily. This line means that there were no volcanic eruptions, no earthquakes.

Motley...Of many colours.

Shorn...Shaved.

The velvet scabbard etc ...His soft manner did not conceal his sternness.

Holy Thursday...The Thursday before good Friday on which Christ was crucified.

Mantle...Cloak.

Ermine...A fur. The name of the animal from whom the fur is taken.

Cavalcade...Company of riders.

Housings...Cloth coverings on back of horses.

Piebald...Of two colours irregularly arranged. He was made to ride a piebald horse to match his motley.

Shambling...Walking or running awkwardly.

Demurely...Gravely. In a composed manner

Benediction...Blessing.

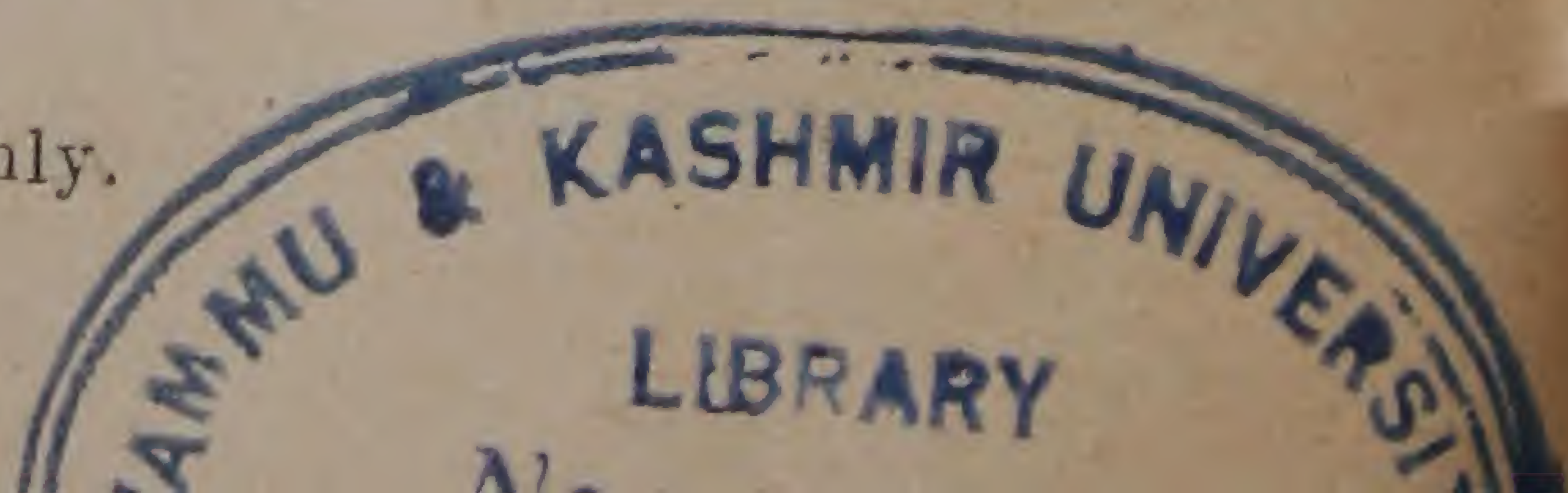
Fervent...With feeling.

Apostolic grace It is a Christian belief that the aspostles (messengers) of Christ have a special blessing to confer.

Mien...Face,

Baffled...Defeated.

Hustled...Pushed roughly.





Pervour...Zeal, passion. Here religious passion.

Unwonted...Unusual.

Heard the rushing garments of the lord...Felt that God was near.

Train—Followers. Procession.

Palermo—The capitol of Sicily in those days. Angelus Domini. Repeated by Roman Catholics at morning, noon and sunset at the sound of a bell.

Here it means the bell for this prayer.

My sins as scarlet are—Scarlet is deep red. My sins are great.

Cloister—Convent; monastic house.

Penitence—Repentance.

Shriven—Forgiven, absolved (by a priest after penance).

## JOHN HENRY NEWMAN 1801—1899

### *Lead, Kindly Light*

A most beautiful hymn, a favourite with Mahatma Gandhi. Newman wrote it on his return from a trip to the Mediterranean in 1882.

A hymn is a song of praise (to God).

Kindly Light—God. God is compared to light because it is the purest thing we can think of.

Circling gloom—Surrounding darkness (of despair or misfortune).

Home—Heaven or God.

I do not ask to see Etc.—Mahatma Gandhi quoted these lines often.

Garish—Showy.

Remember not past year—Forgive me, my past sins.

Moor and fen crag and torrent—Symbols for the difficulties of life.

Fen—Low marshy or flooded land.

Crag—Rock.

Morn—A symbol for knowledge or perfect faith.



## HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW

*A Dutch Picture*

Buccaneers—Sea rovers, pirates.

Singed the beard of the King of Spain—Damaged Spanish ships and trade. A saying made famous by Francis Darke in reference to his burning the Spaniah fleet in Cadiz harbour,

Dean—Head of Cathedral.

Mease—Name of river,

Tankards—Large drinking vessels.

Tulip Garden and Wind Mills—Both are famous features of Holland. The tulips are grown for pleasure and also, as at Haarlam, with great success for profit.

Mustachio—Moustache.

Listed—From list in a sense now uncommon. Listment originally a strip or stripe edge or border; Listed here means striped.

Blazing brands—Burning logs of wood,

Rembrandt—A famous Dutch painter particularly impressive in his treatment of firelight upon figures and faces in unlit rooms,

Taragon—in Spain,

The Dutch school of painters was famous for its artistic treatment of everyday subjects. The word Dutch in the title of his poem has a double meaning. Simon Danz is a Dutchman so this is a picture of Dutchman. Also it is a picture (in a poem) after the famous Dutch painters.

## JOHN MASEFIELD b 1876

*Sea Fever*

John Masefield is the present Poet Laureate. His early poems dealt with rough sea-faring men. He is a difficult poet to choose from because his best work is in long poems.



There is a wistful rhythm in "Sea fever" that exactly expresses the longing of the poet for the life of the sea-farer.

Lonely—A romantic attitude. Also a hard fact. The sea is so vast that one does feel alone on it.

Wheel—The steering wheel.

Spray—Foam. Tiny drops of water blown to the wind.

Spume—Foam, foam.

Vagrant—Wandering.

Gipsy—With no fixed home.

Whetted—made sharp.

Yarn—Anecdote. Traveller's tale.

The long trick—Trick in sea slang means a man's turn at the helm, usually two hours. Here it is a symbol for the strain of living.

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SIR HENRY NEWBOLT 1852—1938

*A Ballad of Sir Pertab Singh*

A poem condemning the caste system. Caste as it is understood now, as by birth is a great blot on our social system. Those who originated the caste system did not think of caste as hereditary. A person's caste depended on his special aptitudes. One who was possessed of an acute brain was put into the Brahmin caste. And so with the other castes. It was from this point of view that mankind could be divided into four castes.

"The four castes were created by me according to the varied distribution of excellencies and Karmas"—Bhagavt Gita, IV 13. When caste became hereditary, and it was considered that the mere touch of an outcaste polluted the Brahmin or the so-called "high" caste man then our country began to go down and our best thinkers raised their voice against it. The Lord Buddha tried to break caste as did others thinkers too.

A man does not become a Brahmana by his plaited hair, by his birth. I do not call a man a Brahmana because of his origin or of his mother.

Dhammapada XXVI, 393. 396



Adhered to for a long time are the views of the ignorant. The ignorant tell us one is Brahmana by birth. Not by birth is one a Brahmana, not is one by birth no Brahmana. By Karma one is a Brahmana, by Karma is one no Brahmsna.

Sutta Nipata.

The view of caste expressed in this poem is the view of the Lord Budha. Caste is made by Karma *i.e.*, what we do here and now. It is not by birth.

Hilt and heel—He clicked heels to attention like a soldier.

The Shadow—Death,

---

JOHN DRINKWATER 1882—1973

### *A Prayer*

John Drinkwater is a well-known dramatist and poet. One of his plays "Abraham Lincoln" has become a popular success. Read it and see if you find anything in it like the scenes of Gandhiji's assassination.

This poem draws attention to the need for action. We indulge in subtle distinctions between right and wrong but this is unprofitable. We have already a sufficient stock of knowledge and it is our duty to utilise it in the service of humanity.

Light—Knowledge.

Darkness—Ignorance.

The slow ascension of our day—More knowledge coming slowly.

Remission—Forgiveness, decrease.

Little healing—The small comfort that we can give others.

The high perception swift—Quickly to know,

Refrain—Desist (from action).

Sift—Judge.



Across our hearts—By intuition we have sufficient perception  
of right and wrong.

The deep intent—The good intention (coming from the  
heart).

W. H. DAVIES b. 1871

*Leisure*

William Henry Davies, born in 1871, has struck from the beginning a note of absolute spontaneity. His genuine experience, his intimate prolonged contact with the misery of life and the intoxication of the open road to the unknown impart an accent of penetrating truth to his delicate naturalism. He possesses without effort that fresh simplicity after which others will strive in vain. Davies gives in this poem a beautiful conception of leisure. We must have time to stand and watch the objects of nature with true enjoyment. It is an appeal to escape from the stress and strain of modern urban life and go back to nature for peace and enjoyment.

GERALD GOULD b. 1885

*Wander Thirst*

Gerald Gould, poet, essayist and journalist, was born in 1885. He spent many years at Oxford as a student and as a Fellow. He writes in a charming and simple manner and there is delightful music in his poem.

'Wander Thirst' expresses an intense longing for adventure and travel experience. "The sea the stars and sky call the wanderer as a parched throat thirsts for water." A similar longing for travel is to be found in "Sea Fever."

Beyond the east etc—The attraction of the sunrise on the one side and that of the mighty sea on the other.

Let me be—Let me rest.

It works on me like madness—It is a strong and disturbing feeling.

The blue hills—The hills appear blue on account of the distance.



The long horizon—The vast expanse of the earth.

The old ships draw etc.—The ships are symbolical of the generations of men, the young starting on their life's adventure and the old returning home after their lives, wanderings."

Note the contrast between 'come I may' and 'go I must.' The last line means 'Fate may place the responsibility on the stars etc., because it is they who do not allow me to return home.'"

## SAROJINI NAIDU

### *The Queen's Rival*

Most of us know Sarojini Naidu as a great politician and unmatched orator. (Her broadcast on the death of Gandhiji will always be remembered by all). But she was also a lyric poet of high order. (Her "The Golden Threshold" and "The Sceptered Flute" are a landmark in poetic achievement. She had the gift of the jewelled phrase and is first and last a poet though she was Governor of the United Provinces. She herself said that she had to choose between poetry and politics and preferred politics. Who can blame her for the choice for it was a choice between slavery and freedom? She contributed more than her share towards the realisation of a free India.

Agate, porphory, onyx and jade—All precious stones.

Tissue—A fine, woven cloth.

Gainsay—Deny, contradict.

Mien—Face.

Handmaids—Servants,

Seven new moon tides—A poetic expression for seven beautiful girls.

Oriole—A bird with black wings.

Fay—Fairy.

Fillet—Ribbon for binding the hair.



*Ecstasy*—When the feeling are so powerfull that one is beside  
oneself with joy or rapture.

*Mellifluous*—Sweet.

*Paens*—Songs of thanks giving or praise.

*Rills*—Small streams.

*Glancing*—Shining.

*Sumptuous*—, costly. Here Beautiful,

*Chorus*—Singing together. When all life is rejoicing shall I  
be sad ?



















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